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Insurgency in Latin America

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Insurgency in Latin America

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INSURGENCY IN LATIN AMERICA[1]

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the character of the insurgency threat in Latin America, and the prospects over the next few years.[2]

CONCLUSIONS

A. There has been a rash of insurgencies in Latin America since Castro's triumph in Cuba in 1959, but only a few have developed much virulence. The more active ones, in Venezuela, Guatemala, Peru, and Colombia, have either lost ground or gained little over the past year.

B. The growth of Latin American insurgencies has been hindered by the disunity of extremist groups, the want of willing martyrs, and the failure to attract much popular support. It has also been contained by the counteraction undertaken by the governments involved, with substantial US support.

C. Insurgencies tend to prosper along one of two lines: the largely unhampered expansion of a guerrilla campaign, as in Cuba, or the exploitation of a sudden upheaval, as in the Dominican Republic in 1965. Thus the prospects for a particular insurgency are likely to depend less on its initial strength than on the disabilities of the government which may prevent effective counteraction. The danger of insurgency is probably greater in some chronically unstable countries not now plagued by insurgent activity, such as Bolivia or Haiti, than in a country like Venezuela, where the government is moving effectively against an active insurgency and, to an extent, against the underlying social tensions.

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[1] Excluding Cuba, for which the current estimate is NIE 85-65, dated 19 August 1965.

[2] By insurgency we mean the systematic use of violence to overthrow or undermine the established political and social order. We exclude military *coups d'etat*, endemic banditry, and spontaneous disorder.

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D. In this context, the inherently unstable political situations in the following countries render them vulnerable to the rapid development of insurgency: Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Panama.

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DISCUSSION

I. INTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING INSURGENCY

1. In this estimate we are concerned with the potentialities for insurgency in Latin America—that is the systematic use of violence to overthrow or undermine the established political and social order.[3] By this definition we intend to exclude military *coups d'etat*, endemic banditry, and spontaneous disorder.

2. As a matter of convenience, we shall discuss the status of insurgent movements in particular countries in the following terms:

a. *Incipient insurgency:* an organizational stage in which would-be insurgents are recruiting and training cadres and establishing operational bases, but are not engaged in a systematic campaign of active insurrectionary operations, although they may commit some demonstrative acts of violence.

b. *Limited operational insurgency:* a stage in which the insurgents are seeking to establish or maintain a presence through sporadic guerrilla raids or acts of urban terrorism, but of necessity are still primarily concerned to survive governmental counteraction and to develop further an operational base.

c. *Full insurgency:* a stage in which the insurgents, having achieved the objectives of *b* above, are engaged in an all-out effort to undermine and overthrow the established regime.

3. Insurgency can move down this scale as well as up, of course. Venezuela affords an example of a full insurgency reduced by effective counteraction to a limited operational one, Peru an example of a limited operational insurgency set back close to the starting point, but still alive and again incipient in terms of a second round.

4. The rash of insurgencies in Latin America in recent years reflects the impact of Fidel Castro's dramatic success in 1958-1959 upon an inherently unstable society in which resort to violence for personal as well as political purposes is traditional. The traditional Spanish concept of honor exalts defiance of authority; in this context the man who dares to stake his life upon the issue is considered to be entitled to have his own way if he can impose it. The application of force, or the threat of force, has been an accepted way of effecting a political change. In very few countries can there be any confidence in the electoral process. Although the present trend is toward a greater regard for constitutionality (e.g., Venezuela), only in Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Uruguay has it long been the normal expectation that elected governments will serve out their terms and transfer their power to normally elected successors.

5. The privileged civilian and military groups, unable in most cases to settle their own conflicts peaceably and constitutionally, now must also cope with the

[3] The more general subject of Communist potentialities in Latin America is considered in NIE 80/90-64, dated 19 August 1964, which remains generally valid.

rising demand for change heard from those who believe the lower classes have been too long ignored or exploited. Although the particulars vary considerably from country to country, in nearly every case there is a wide and growing gap between what the bulk of the population has and what it wants, in terms of economic well-being, social status, and political influence.[4] Even where the still dominant upper classes have begun to heed the demand for change, or where middle class reform governments are committed to directing it, the rapid growth of population and of awareness of deprivation and the relatively slow and uneven growth of the economy constitute formidable barriers to any significant reduction of social tensions over the short term.

6. So far, despite the rising clamor for change, the most deprived elements of the population have lent little support to insurgency; the poor still retain a considerable respect for hierarchy. The men who find the *status quo* intolerable are most often members of the relatively advantaged urban middle class, especially students influenced by Marxist indoctrination in schools and universities. Some of these political rebels, motivated in part by personal ambition and frustration, in part by heroic idealism and disdain for all authority, take advantage of the manifest instability of their environment by turning to insurgency.

7. Insurgency in Latin America depends primarily on the willingness of indigenous individuals to act in defiance of the consequences. Outside powers—Cuba, the USSR, and Communist China—can incite and encourage insurgency, and provide training, advice, and clandestine aid, but the decision to act is local and personal. Once impelled to act, by their own motivations, the would-be insurgents are disposed to seek ideological justification, moral support, and material aid wherever they can find it, but, speaking generally, they are not under outside control.

8. Just as there are factors in the Latin American environment that breed incipient insurgencies, there are others that impede the development of all-out campaigns. First, there is usually a dearth of dedicated, disciplined insurgents. The self-centered impatience and idealism that impel the student to declare his armed rebellion against the government often impair his effectiveness as an insurgent over the long haul. In many ways he is a dilettante: although intellectually alienated from the established order, he seldom harbors gut hatreds stemming from national, cultural, or class exploitation. If he becomes a guerrilla, the absence of urban amenities as well as the omnipresence of privation and danger often dampen whatever ardor he had at the start. For these reasons, the cadres of some insurgent groups are partly manned with cashiered military officers and incorrigible outlaws, more interested in the spoils than in the political purposes of the insurgency.

[4] For descriptions of the basic situation in each country, see NIE 80/90-64, "Communist Potentialities in Latin America." More recent estimates covering the situation in individual countries are available for Argentina (NIE 91-65, 9 June 1965); Brazil (NIE 93-65, 12 May 1965); Colombia (NIE 88-65, 9 July 1965); Panama (SNIE 84-65, 21 December 1965); Uruguay (SNIE 98-65, 17 June 1965); and Venezuela (NIE 89-65, 16 December 1965).

9. Second, once the cadres are in the field, they usually find it difficult to obtain sufficient support to expand their operations. Financial aid from abroad, although useful in getting things started, is usually too small to cover operating costs, while other extremist groups more often than not view the insurgents as rivals and are loath to lend their assets. To the peasants (or urban poor) in the base area, the insurgent at the start usually is as alien as the government tax collector. Thus, even where the peasants are already antagonistic toward the government or the local *patrón*, the insurgents must still work skillfully and patiently to win their confidence and enlist their active cooperation. Only after the insurgents have grown strong enough to control the area through coercion can they count on a steady flow of the vital ingredients for an expanding campaign—new recruits, supplies, and information on troop movements.

10. Third, even when the insurgents gain some momentum, the government security forces usually retain significant numerical and technological advantages. Although they often start out as inexperienced in field operations as the insurgents, the regular forces can afford to learn from their mistakes in initial encounters, whereas for the novice guerrillas early mistakes can result in crippling setbacks. Following strong US urging and with US assistance, many Latin American governments have begun to develop a readiness to meet an insurgency threat. Military and police leaders, shocked by Castro's success against the poorly prepared Cuban security forces and by his subsequent brutal treatment of them, have been displaying a greater interest in professional improvement generally and in the techniques of countering insurgency in particular. Over the past year, with stronger government backing and increased experience, the security forces have reduced or at least contained the four most active insurgencies, those in Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and Venezuela.

11. This experience has shown that insurgency can be contained and reduced where governments are able and willing to take effective counteraction. The prospects for any particular insurgency depend less on the character of the insurgents than on that of the government. Castro prevailed in Cuba, not by virtue of his own strength and skill, but because the Batista regime was so thoroughly discredited that it could neither rally political support nor compel its greatly superior military forces to combat the insurgents. Insurgency burgeoned in Venezuela because political considerations long inhibited Betancourt from taking effective counteraction. Precisely because other governments, especially those in the more unstable countries, may find themselves similarly incapable or inhibited, even an incipient insurgency can represent a notable danger.

II. EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR INSURGENCY

12. Fidel Castro is the hero and model for almost all Latin American insurgents and would-be insurgents. He in turn considers himself the natural leader of an eventual revolution throughout Latin America. Cuban propaganda broadcasts to Latin America are a constant incitement to revolution, although their pitch varies in intensity according to the circumstances of the moment.

The Cuban foreign intelligence service (in which there is a significant Soviet presence) is directly engaged in clandestinely fomenting subversion, including insurgency. Several thousand Latin Americans have been brought to Cuba for political indoctrination; a large proportion of them have also been given instruction in the techniques of guerrilla warfare and urban terrorism.[5] The Cuban service maintains contact with selected agents among these trainees, for the evident purpose of exercising some degree of operational direction through them. Although Cuba generally expects Latin American subversive movements to be self-sustaining, in several instances it has supplied funds to get things started. It has also supplied arms and munitions to at least one active and promising insurgency, in Venezuela.

13. Fidel Castro has been greatly disappointed by the meager results of seven years of such effort. He has publicly denounced the ineffectuality of Latin American revolutionaries in general, while praising the active insurgents in Venezuela and Guatemala. He appears to have abandoned his expectation of an early general revolution in Latin America and to have decided to concentrate his efforts on those countries in which there is some promise of active insurgency.

14. In general, the established, Moscow-oriented Communist parties in Latin America have resented Cuban subversive activity as an intrusion. Considering their countries to be as yet unready for a decisive revolutionary effort, they have preferred to pursue a line of political action and have regarded Cuban incitement of insurgency as amateurish adventurism. The caution of the older party leaders has tended to alienate their more impatient and adventurous followers and to enhance the influence of Havana and Peking among them. Communist China has moved to exploit this conflict within the Communist ranks by supplying some indoctrination, training, and funds to the dissidents. In this the Chinese motivation would seem to be less the promotion of insurgency in Latin America than the recruitment of adherents in Peking's struggle with Moscow for world Communist leadership.

15. These developments led to the convocation of a conference of all the Latin American Communist parties at Havana in November 1964. This meeting is meaningful primarily in the Sino-Soviet context. The manifest Soviet interest was to reverse the growing association of Castroism and Maoism in Latin America, to effect a reconciliation between Castro and the Latin American Communist parties, and to draw Castro to the Soviet side in the Sino-Soviet controversy. Soviet success has been marked by the ensuing deterioration of Sino-Cuban relations. As regards Latin America, the deal made at Havana was that Castro would desist from promoting insurgency in those countries in which the established Communist parties preferred to pursue political action, and that the established parties would, in return, support insurgency where it already existed or might in the future occur. This arrangement was entirely in

[5] There has been a marked decrease in this activity since 1963, presumably because it now is more difficult to bring trainees to Cuba and because it no longer is deemed as necessary to do so. Those who have received Cuban instruction are expected to give such instruction to others in their home countries.

keeping with Castro's own tendency to become more selective in his subversive efforts.

16. The 1964 Havana conference produced a list of six countries in which, it declared, insurgency was to be supported. The list included Venezuela and Guatemala, where insurgents were already active, and Colombia and Honduras, where insurgency was then incipient. It included also Haiti and Paraguay, where there was no early prospect of effective insurgency—probably only in order to take propaganda advantage of the bad reputations of Presidents Duvalier and Stroessner. It is notable that neither the Dominican Republic nor Peru was listed. Castro added Peru to the list when insurgency broke out there in mid-1965, but the Dominican Republic remains unlisted.

17. The recently concluded "Tricontinental Solidarity Conference" at Havana was an expanded version of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conferences which have been held periodically since 1958, with progressively decreasing attention from non-Communists and increasing internal dissensions. Castro's interest was to gain prestige and a greater voice for himself as spokesman for Latin America in the underdeveloped world. In pursuing this interest Castro emphasized strongly "armed struggle" as the principal tactic in the "struggle against imperialism." The Soviet interest was to "call the New World into being to redress the balance of the Old": specifically, to circumvent China's resistance to Soviet participation in Afro-Asian conferences by including a bloc of pro-Moscow Communists from Latin America. The Chinese interest was to preserve China's position as leader of the Afro-Asian group and to impress the Communist world with China's militancy.

18. The Conference adopted the standard resolution in support of "national liberation" movements, with a somewhat more explicit endorsement of "armed struggle" as opposed to other forms of action. Moreover, the Soviet delegation took occasion to express "fraternal solidarity" with the active insurgents in Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and Venezuela. For their part, the Cubans appeared to be moving back toward the extreme hardline of earlier years. Both Castro and President Dorticos affirmed that "any revolutionary movement anywhere in the world can count on Cuba's unconditional support." However, Castro's indirect apology for inaction in the Dominican crisis clearly exposed the limitations upon Cuban action when it comes in direct confrontation with the US.

19. The Conference established a "Committee of Assistance and Aid to National Liberation Movements" with the objective, among others, of "giving all necessary support to national liberation movements, particularly those fighting with arms in hand." The chief significance of the Conference in relation to Latin American insurgency, however, may lie in the subsequent private conference of Latin American delegations, which created a Latin American Solidarity Organization, one of whose announced purposes is "to support liberation movements." The full import of the proceedings of this private conference is not yet known, but reports [redacted] indicate a considerable

lack of agreement as to how vigorously insurgency efforts should now be pushed. Thus, while there will probably be some increase from recent low levels of external support to the insurgency movements in Latin America, we do not believe there will be a rapid, major step-up.

III. OPERATIONAL INSURGENCIES: COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, PERU, VENEZUELA

20. The four operational insurgencies in Latin America have many common characteristics. They are nonetheless distinguished, not only by the diversity of the local political situations (see inset on facing page), but also by a disparity in the intensity of insurgent operations. There was all-out insurgency in Venezuela in late 1963, but it suffered a disastrous defeat. A considerable insurgent force remains in being, but its operations are limited to sporadic raids in remote areas. Peruvian insurgents made their presence known in mid-1965 with an ambitious attempt to launch a guerrilla campaign, but they too suffered a disastrous defeat and for the present are quiescent. The Guatemalan insurgents have never progressed beyond sporadic terrorism. Insurgency in Colombia has barely emerged from the incipient stage.

Who's Who in Insurgency

21. The extremist parties of Latin America—the orthodox Communists (pro-Moscow), "Marxist-Leninists" (pro-Peking), and national or homegrown revolutionaries (usually pro-Castro)—are often rivals, even though all are working to overthrow the established order.[6] Only in Venezuela has an active insurgency enjoyed the combined and coordinated support of the most important extremist groups, and even this unity is in danger of collapsing. The Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) has about 1,000 members, of whom about half are in urban units not now active. It is primarily the military arm of the Communist Party (PCV), but the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), a national revolutionary group that broke away from Betancourt's Democratic Action party, participates in an autonomous partner through its own armed bands. For the past year or so, sizable factions of both parties have been advocating at least a temporary cessation of the insurgency. This issue has already caused a formal split in the MIR and threatens to split the PCV as well.[7]

22. The more typical Latin American pattern prevails in Peru and Colombia. In each case the insurgency is conducted by a small national revolutionary party

[6] These rivalries, based sometimes on personal grounds, sometimes on tactical issues, usually precede and determine the choice of foreign patron. There is considerable movement from party to party, especially among younger members. Some of those who switch probably are working covertly for their old party.

[7] Because of the consistently aggressive policies of the PCV, no pro-Chinese Communist party has been formed in Venezuela. The pro-insurgency faction of the PCV, in reaction to the increasingly lukewarm attitude of the Central Committee toward continuing the insurgency, is threatening to form a separate party. If it should do so, it would probably welcome Chinese backing.

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THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, PERU, AND VENEZUELA

Colombia: President Valencia, whose term ends in August 1966 presides over the National Front, a cumbersome coalition prescribed in the constitution in 1958 in an effort to reduce the perennial strife between the two traditional political parties. He no longer commands the necessary two-thirds support in Congress and for the past 10 months has ruled by decree under a state of siege. Many of his ministers are competent, however. Thus, despite repeated political and economic crises and little progress on social problems, the ship of state has not run aground. Although concerned with each new crisis, the military has steadfastly backed the government. To its credit, the Valencia administration has considerably reduced the rural banditry problem.

Guatemala: Chief of Government Peralta came to power in 1963 via a military coup that was solidly backed by the armed forces and welcomed by most conservative and some leftist political groups. His reasonably honest, stolid rule provided a period of political stability, but produced little progress on basic national problems. He has scheduled presidential elections for March 1966, which has led to a general increase in political tensions and a falling off of his military and civilian support.

Peru: President Belaunde, since his election in 1963, has initiated some badly needed social and economic reforms. He has been forced to move slowly, however, because of economic strains, administrative inexperience, and resistance by the oligarchy generally and by the political opposition that controls Congress. His relationship with the military remains somewhat delicate, although it is generally inclined to support him.

Venezuela: First under President Betancourt (1959-1964), and since March 1964 under President Leoni, the leftist reformist Democratic Action party has ruled in coalition with other leftist or centrist parties. Buoyed by its oil wealth, Venezuela's economy is the soundest in Latin America and its program of social reforms one of the most impressive. Whereas the Congressional opposition to Betancourt used to give moral support to the insurgents, the opposition in the new Congress is much more responsible. The military, although still somewhat worried about the government's will to resist the threat of communism, generally supports the Leoni government and is now less inclined to interfere in political matters.

while the orthodox Communists, the largest extremist group, lend little more than lip service.[8] In Peru, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), an offshoot of the moderate leftist APRA party, placed 100 or so hardcore guerrillas in the field in mid-1965. Most of these have since disbanded or been killed by government forces. Several extremist splinter groups began to assist the insurgency campaign late in 1965, but may have been discouraged by the recent defeats of the MIR guerrillas. In Colombia, the Youth of the Revolutionary Liberal Movement (J/MRL), once connected with the moderate leftist party of the same name, had approximately 50 men in its Army of National Liberation (ELN) when it started operations early in 1965. Here, too, extremist splinter groups are inclined to join in the insurgency. One of them, the Marxist-Leninist (pro-Chinese) Communist Party is more soundly organized than the J/MRL and may be absorbing the ELN guerrillas into its own ranks.

23. In Guatemala, some 100 insurgents are split into two rival camps. The 13th of November Revolutionary Movement (MR-13), sporadically active for several years, is led by Marco Antonio Yon Sosa, a military renegade who for a time adopted Castroist colors in return for Cuban financial assistance. The Guatemalan Communist Party tried, unsuccessfully, to gain control of the MR-13. In 1965 the Communists launched their own group, the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), many of whose guerrillas defected from the MR-13. The FAR now has the backing of Cuba; apparently as a result, Yon Sosa has of late been sounding a pro-Chinese line.

Goals: The Long versus the Short War

24. The ultimate goal of these insurgents is to replace the established order with a revolutionary one. But is this to take place after years of patient preparation, or is it to be accomplished swiftly through bold, even reckless, action? The insurgents themselves are divided and inconsistent on this issue. For the most part the extremist groups have turned to insurgency as a tactic out of weakness, not strength—they realize that their followings are too insignificant in numbers and influence for them to be able to advance the revolutionary cause through political action or through such traditional forms of direct action as military coups and general strikes. The PCV in Venezuela, for example, turned to all-out insurgency only after failing in its efforts to gain power by a variety of other means: political action, popular demonstrations in Caracas, two military mutinies. Those extremist leaders who sanction insurgency usually stress that a protracted struggle will be required. In this concept, the purpose of the insurgency is to harass and discredit the established regime, to prevent it from accomplishing anything constructive, to dramatize the revolutionary cause, and gradually to win popular support for it.

[8] Colombia's orthodox Communist Party (PCC) does give financial and propaganda backing to the several Communist-led armed bands that have persisted in remote mountain regions since the civil war of the 1940s. The PCC, however, exercises little control over these groups, some of which have turned peaceable in recent years, while others continue to operate principally as marauding outlaws.

25. At times, however, these same leaders—and more regularly the younger activists—betray a belief that the very process of insurgency can quickly overcome the government's advantage in strength. This is what "Che" Guevara's widely read text on guerrilla warfare seems to promise them: just as in Cuba, the insurgents through their own boldness can create the conditions necessary for a successful revolution.[9] Thus direct attacks against the establishment are called for in order to provoke such repressive counteraction as will arouse the people against the regime and so lead to its early overthrow.

26. These conflicting tendencies are most evident in Venezuela, where, ever since 1962, antagonists have argued the merits of the short war of all-out urban terror and the long war of guerrilla struggle. Currently, most PCV leaders, insofar as they advocate continuing the insurgency, give primacy to guerrilla warfare. FALN activists, however, are urging the renewal of all-out terrorism. The Peruvian and Colombian insurgents, because of their limited assets, concentrate on plans for a long struggle, but not without arguments on how boldly to harass the establishment in the meantime. The guerrillas in Guatemala are also few in number, but have boldly engaged in occasional campaigns of urban terrorism, such as the recent wave of kidnapings.

Operating Methods

27. The methods of operation of the Latin American insurgent groups have much in common; the differences are primarily a reflection of varied capabilities. The meager strength of the insurgent groups in Peru and Colombia has forced them to restrict their operations to remote rural areas, except for some ineffectual urban bombings. The Guatemalan insurgents usually concentrate on rural operations, but from time to time they conduct effective terror operations in Guatemala City. During 1962-1963 the Venezuelan FALN depended primarily on urban terror to bring down the Betancourt government. When this failed, and when public opinion turned decidedly against the terrorists, the FALN shifted its emphasis to rural operations. Several urban bands are kept ready, however, for occasional hit-and-run violence.

28. The insurgents usually attempt to cultivate the support of the peasants in their base area, but have been generally unsuccessful. The Peruvian MIR conducted a partly successful political indoctrination of certain Indian communities for two years before launching its guerrilla campaign. Usually the indoctrination effort is more superficial. Whenever possible, the FALN guerrillas in Venezuela pay good prices for their supplies in an attempt to wean the peasants from their loyalties to Democratic Action and other non-revolutionary

[9] *La guerra de guerrillas* was first published in 1960. Guevara was much less optimistic in some of his later analyses of Latin American prospects, but these are less widely read. In mid-1963, he attributed much of the Cuban success to the fact that the US Government and the Cuban middle classes had not realized how revolutionary Castro was. He concluded that Castroism had provided a warning, and that the preparations of the US and the governments of Latin America would make subsequent revolutionary successes "infinitely more difficult."

parties. The Guatemalan insurgent bands have recruited some of their effectives from malcontents in their area of operation, but so far have made little impression on the Indian population. The gains from these various efforts often prove temporary. In some cases the guerrillas run out of patience or cash in their dealings with the peasants; in others, government forces make their presence known in the area, at times with brutal consequences for the peasants suspected of cooperating with the insurgents.

29. The typical insurgent operation, once a guerrilla base has been opened, is the hit-and-run raid on an isolated village or hacienda. The objective, in addition to the procurement of food, funds, and weapons, is to undermine the peasant's confidence in the government's ability to control the area. Government officials often are murdered, whether or not they resist the raiders, while the common villagers merely suffer a political harangue. In supplementary efforts to point up the impotency of the government, isolated military posts are attacked, small patrols are ambushed, and nearby highway traffic is disrupted. The kidnapings in Guatemala City, highly effective as a means of raising funds, also serve to demonstrate the impotence of the government to provide protection. To make this same point, the Venezuelan insurgents staged such spectacular operations as the seizure of government-owned passenger airplanes and ocean vessels and the kidnaping of visiting celebrities and US military personnel.

External Assistance

30. Castro's patronage was a key factor in the development of the Venezuelan FALN. He supplied it with strong moral support, technical instruction, and financial aid. At the height of the FALN's insurgent operations, in 1963, he attempted to supply also arms and munitions.[10] The FLAN, however, is not entirely dependent on such assistance. In 1963 it was able to carry on a vigorous campaign of insurgency on the basis of its own resources and locally stolen money, weapons, and explosives. Since the failure of that effort in the face of popular revulsion and vigorous governmental counteraction, the FALN has been hampered by shortages of money and supplies. Substantial funds, presumably of Soviet origin, were sent to the PCV from abroad during 1965, but much of this money was intercepted in transit by the Venezuelan police.

31. Castro has also supplied funds to Yon Sosa's MR-13 in Guatemala, the J/MRL in Colombia, and the MIR in Peru. Communist China has provided some paramilitary training and small subsidies for the "Marxist-Leninist" parties girding for insurgency in Colombia and Peru, and may also have attempted to buy influence with the J/MRL and MIR. Pursuant to the 1964 Havana agreement, Castro has switched his Guatemalan account from the MR-13 to the orthodox Communist FAR, since when Yon Sosa has taken up a pro-Chinese

[10] A three-ton shipment of Cuban origin was accidentally found on a Venezuelan beach. It was probably the bulk of such Cuban aid, though certainly not all of it.

line. In early 1965 Castro cut off aid to the Peruvian MIR, but may now have resumed such aid, in recognition of its recent insurgency campaign.

Government Responses

32. The governments confronted with active insurgencies were generally poorly prepared for the challenge at the start. For political or for budgetary reasons, they hesitated to meet the problem head on. With the exception of the anti-banditry campaigns of the Colombian Army, the military services in the countries affected had had little field experience. For the most part, "internal warfare" was a subject only recently thrust upon them at US training schools and by US military missions. The civilian police forces, handicapped by poor organization, training, and equipment, were equally ill-prepared to cope with urban terrorism.

33. Over the past year or two, however, all four governments—prodded by the US, by their own military, and, in the case of Peru, by the opposition parties as well—have significantly increased their capabilities and determination to cope with insurgency. The transformation has been most dramatic in Venezuela, where the terrorists can no longer operate with virtual impunity. In October 1963, President Betancourt finally ordered a crackdown on the FALN and its political sponsors in the PCV and MIR.[11] By that time the Caracas police had been much improved in morale and effectiveness, [redacted] The police, with military support as required, inflicted heavy losses on the FALN terrorists. Since then the government forces have held the initiative. With the aid of greatly improved intelligence capabilities, they have intercepted substantial funds being sent to the insurgents from abroad, have seized a clandestine arms factory and other support facilities, and have arrested key insurgent leaders. The urban operations of the FALN have been brought to a virtual standstill.

34. In both Colombia and Peru, improved intelligence capabilities in the cities have been put to use in "sweeps" of suspected subversives that have temporarily disrupted the support mechanisms for rural guerrilla operations. The Guatemalan police have had some success with similar tactics; few terrorists have been caught so far, but the wave of kidnapings has subsided, at least for the time being.

35. Military operations in rural areas, when carried out with determination, have uniformly succeeded in forcing the guerrillas onto the defensive. In no case have they been driven from the field completely, but they usually are pushed back into more remote, less desirable areas. When they are forced to retreat, they usually lose not only painfully accumulated equipment and supplies, but also much of their influence among the peasants. Government troops, mean-

[11] Betancourt moved after a particularly brutal terrorist attack had enraged the military and antagonized the populace. Also, by that time he was confident that the opposition parties wanted to participate in the December elections and would do nothing to undermine the constitutional system in reaction to the crackdown.

while, gain valuable field experience and the improvement in morale that comes from initial success. Several of the governments have begun civic action programs to win the allegiance of the peasants in the areas afflicted with insurgency. These usually are long-range programs, however, and have had only token impact so far. Also, at times the use of indiscriminate force against the peasants in guerrilla areas has had the opposite effect.

36. Despite these improvements in counterinsurgency, there remain certain weaknesses which prevent the eradication of insurgency. Intelligence capabilities are still very limited, especially outside of the capital cities. The increased coordination between police and military at the headquarters level has still had little effect in the field. Anti-guerrilla operations are hampered by shortages of modern transportation and communications equipment, especially helicopters and field radios. Because of a customary tolerence for political violence, the libertarian character of legal codes, and the susceptibility of the judiciary to influence, it is often legally impossible to detain suspected insurgents. Unless caught in the act (or killed "while trying to escape"), they are likely to be eventually released. According to ancient custom, they may be permitted or required to leave the country, in which case they may return clandestinely. Finally, once an active insurgent threat has subsided, governments tend to return to their former complacency and their preoccupation with politics as usual.

Political and Economic Effects

37. So far the operational insurgencies have caused no lasting political damage; rather, their effect has been to strengthen the hand of the government. In Venezuela, Betancourt's congressional opposition gave moral support to the FALN, charging that its insurgency was provoked by Betancourt's repressive rule. Betancourt was restrained from immediate counteraction against the insurgents by his desire to avoid giving credence to that charge. His well-timed crackdown, when it came, was demonstrably popular. As a result, his successor, Leoni, has enjoyed much stronger congressional and military support than Betancourt ever had. Some of the Venezuelan military still worry lest Leoni case up on the FALN, but he is under no political pressure to do so. In contrast to the case in Venezuela, the congressional opposition in Peru demanded that President Belaunde take energetic action against the insurgents. The defeat of the insurgents has strengthened Belaunde's political position. Only in Guatemala has urban terrorism weakened the government by aggravating the discord among its supporters which was developing anyhow in the ordinary course of politics.

38. The insurgency campaigns have caused some direct economic damage, but this has been considerable only in Venezuela, where FALN raids during 1962-1963 led to property and production losses in the millions of dollars for the petroleum companies alone. Even so, the Venezuelan economy expanded at a brisk pace during those years. The Guatemalan terrorism has been a factor in the recent flight of domestic capital and possibly in the slowdown of foreign

investment as well, but the overall deterioration in political stability in Guatemala has also contributed to these trends.

Outlook

39. None of the currently operational insurgencies is likely to be eradicated during the next year or two. Deepseated political, economic, and social tensions will continue to provide what the present groups of insurgents, and perhaps new groups as well, believe to be exploitable opportunities. There may be some increase of external aid to active insurgencies. But should any campaign begin to gain momentum, the governments—with the possible exception of Guatemala—would probably be both willing and able to respond with sufficient counterforce to reverse the trend or at least to contain the danger.

40. In Venezuela, the striking power of the FALN will probably continue to decline, both because of losses inflicted by the gradually improving government security forces and because of a growing loss of purpose and morale. The Leoni government, while unlikely to undertake a costly program aimed at the eradication of insurgency, will probably respond forcefully to any signs of growing truculence on the part of the guerrillas or the urban terrorists. In this Leoni would probably have the support of the population, which has come to enjoy the relative political peace and quiet of the past year or so.

41. We believe that the fortunes of the Peruvian and Colombian insurgents will, at best, improve only slightly over the near term. The Belaunde government is likely to keep sufficient military pressure on the MIR guerrillas and any potential allies to block them from regaining the initiative. The insurgency in Colombia could gain momentum if the various active and potential insurgent groups were to unite under effective leadership, but the government would probably be able to deal with them adequately by diverting some experienced army and police units from their pursuit of bandits. The elections to be held in 1966 may precipitate a constitutional crisis which would divert attention from the activities of the insurgents, but their gains would be substantial only in the unlikely event that the crisis were prolonged and bitter.[12]

42. It is in Guatemala that the short-term opportunities for the insurgents now seem the most promising—because of the weaknesses of the government rather than the strength of the insurgents, who are few in number and divided by factional rivalry. Plotting by ambitious military cliques is already well advanced and is likely to continue throughout the year.[13] The insurgents' kidnapping campaign has caused great distress among civilian oligarchs, who may soon encourage the military plotters in hopes that a more authoritarian

[12] The much more formidable forces supporting demagogic ex-dictator Gustavo Rojas Pinilla might also resort to violent action during a constitutional crisis. This would probably take the form of urban rioting aimed at a quick takeover of the government.

[13] Peralta's term is to end in July 1966. Presidential elections are scheduled for March. Peralta is trying to impose a candidate who is unpopular with the military dissidents. If this candidate succeeds to office, the plotting would be likely to continue.

government will protect them against the terrorists. Growing strife among conservative military and civilian groups could divert the security forces from their moderately successful operations against the insurgents in rural areas. The advent of a repressive rightwing government might provide the insurgents with new allies from among the hitherto nonrevolutionary leftists, as well as new opportunities.

IV. INCIPIENT INSURGENCIES: ECUADOR, HONDURAS, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

43. The incipient insurgencies in Ecuador and Honduras are relatively feeble; they are important only because governmental weaknesses render these countries vulnerable to the development of insurgency in possible contingencies.

44. In Ecuador small groups of incompetent zealots have been struggling for years to activate a campaign, but have failed to progress beyond sporadic incidents of violence. They belong either to the hardline (sometimes pro-Chinese) Communist party or to a clique of homegrown revolutionaries who change organizational stripes periodically. The would-be insurgents have received support from abroad in the form of training and financial subsidies, at first primarily from Cuba and of late mostly from China. They have failed to gain the support of the pro-Moscow Communist party, however. [redacted] intelligence and police operations periodically disrupt their organizations and set back their schedules for taking to the field. They will probably persist in their conspiratorial preparations, but the government's harassing counteractions will probably continue to hold them in check, at least over the near term.

45. The Honduran insurgents are better organized than their Ecuadorian counterparts, but deficiencies of one kind or another—or perhaps a lack of boldness—have kept them inactive except for some sporadic demonstrative violence. One insurgent group, the Popular Action Front, is the military arm of the not very militant Honduran Communist Party (PCH). The other group, the Francisco Morazán Movement, was formed by a band of youths who broke away from the PCH while training in Cuba in 1963. So far there is little evidence of any implementation of the 1964 Havana agreement which named Honduras as one of the countries for coordination and intensification of revolutionary activity. The would-be insurgents may be waiting and hoping for an outbreak of armed strife between the Liberal Party and the adherents of General Oswaldo López, who took over the presidency after forcing the Liberals from office in 1963. Such an event would reduce the ability of the security forces to respond to an intensified Communist insurgency, but we believe it unlikely to occur, at least during the next year or so. Although some Liberal militants have talked of armed resistance to the López regime, the major leaders of the party prefer to coexist peacefully in hopes of thereby obtaining political patronage.

46. The much more formidable potential insurgency in the Dominican Republic is caught up in the larger problem of the suspended civil war of April

1965. At present the usual triad of Latin American extremist parties is preparing for insurgency: the orthodox Communist Party; the pro-Chinese Communists of the Dominican Popular Movement (MPD); and the national revolutionaries of the 14 June Revolutionary Movement, a strongly Castroist group with many members closely associated with the two Communist parties.[14] In November 1963, soon after the military had overthrown the leftist reformist government of Juan Bosch, the 14 June organization and the MPD combined forces in a guerrilla campaign. The orthodox Communists condemned this resort to violence as premature; their judgment proved correct. With the assistance of the rural population, the then united and reasonably proficient military forces had no difficulty in inflicting heavy losses on the insurgents and driving them completely from the field.

47. The civil war of 1965, however, dramatically improved the fortunes of the extremist parties, all three of which joined the rebel ("constitutionalist") side. The war began as a coup against the government of Donald Reid Cabral. The main instigators were middle grade military officers and civilian politicians who called for the restoration of the Bosch government. What was initially meant to be a bloodless show of force was quickly transformed into a bitter civil war, pitting the rebellious military elements and most left-of-center groups against the major portion of the armed forces and conservative interests generally. When many of the original leaders of the coup deserted the battlefield, the extremists—because of their relatively tightknit organizations and paramilitary training—gained a strong position in the leadership of the rebel forces.

48. The intervention of the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF) in May 1965 gradually forced a suspension of the Dominican struggle. At present provisional President Garcia Godoy is trying to find grounds for a political reconciliation of the former combatants, but there was little fabric for constructing constitutionalism in the Dominican Republic before the war and there is less now. Sporadic terorism by both leftist extremists and rightist vigilante groups is but one sign that many on both sides would rather renew the armed struggle than make any concession to their adversaries.

49. For their part, the three extremist parties are seeking to keep the situation stirred up and to compromise the provisional government. They are also actively preparing for insurgency or for a renewal of the civil war. They now have assets which they did not have in 1963 or at the outset in 1965: battle experience and consequent self-confidence, a greater supply of weapons, months of relatively unhampered preparation, and the advantage of an aroused popular antagonism toward the military and the IAPF. In some circumstances they could count on the sympathy of the democratic left.

[14] It is the largest of the extremist parties, with about 1,500 members, and traces its origins to a clandestine anti-Trujillo group. In 1962, after the demise of the dictatorship, most moderate members left the group to join newly formed political parties and the extremist members gained control.

50. In this situation, the IAPF is the only stabilizing force in the country. Even with the presence of the IAPF, there is likely to be increasing tension and disorder as the elections scheduled for 1 June 1966 approach. It may include some systematic resort to urban and rural terrorism. When the IAPF eventually withdraws, presumably after the election and installation of a constitutional president, there will be considerable danger of the development of an active insurgency. If a moderate conservative such as Balaguer is elected and installed in office, he probably would have the support of the Dominican military, but would probably face some attempt at insurgency. In this case the Dominican military could probably control the situation, but their task would be more difficult than in 1963. If Bosch were elected, he would almost certainly face a coup attempt. If this attempt quickly succeeded and a military government were established, there would probably be an insurgency effort against it. If such a coup failed to achieve immediate success, a renewal of the civil war would be likely.[15]

V. OTHER VULNERABLE COUNTRIES: HAITI, PANAMA, BOLIVIA

51. The chances for success of a particular insurgency in Latin America, at least over the next few years, are likely to depend more on the disabilities of the government threatened than on the initial strength of the insurgent force. Of the republics not yet discussed in this estimate, we believe that Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Uruguay are unlikely to face any appreciable threat from insurgency over the next few years, because of their relatively proficient security forces and, in some cases, their reasonably strong traditions of constitutionalism. In several of these countries, minuscule groups already have tried to open insurgency campaigns, but were quickly driven from the field.[16]

52. On the other hand, although there is no appreciable insurgent threat in Haiti, Panama, and Bolivia at the present time, the political situation in those countries is notably fragile and they are consequently vulnerable to governmental crises that might speed the development of insurgency either through the relatively unhampered expansion of a guerrilla campaign or through extremist exploitation of a sudden urban upheaval.

53. In Haiti the violent or natural death of President Duvalier is almost certain to touch off a period of chaotic violence. Duvalier holds power through the bald use of terror. He has emasculated the regular army; his personal military forces are led by despised cutthroats. The antagonisms he has fostered between his own black elite and the old mulatto elite will exacerbate the violence that follows from his departure. In these circumstances, a small insurgent force might be able to exercise great influence. Two minuscule Communist parties

[15] There are of course other possible lines of development in this situation. For example: if Balaguer and Bosch, prior to the election, were able to agree on some kind of coalition involving their two parties, the prospects for viable civilian government might be improved.

[16] Some Castroists and Peronist extremists in Argentina; supporters of Leonel Brizola in Brazil; and perennial anti-Somoza and anti-Stroessner extremists in Nicaragua and Paraguay.

within Haiti have not dared to oppose Duvalier openly, but they might be emboldened by his passing. Castro might be able to infiltrate a band of armed Haitians, if he wanted to risk becoming involved in the post-Duvalier power struggle.

54. In Panama, the oligarchical cliques which backed the election of President Robles refuse to support his forward-looking programs. The demagogic Arnulfo Arias, the only political leader with a sizable following, is trying to unseat Robles, but has held back from the use of violence, largely because of the relatively competent security force. The extremists—some trained in Cuba and China—are few in number and afraid to resort to violence on their own. The potentially explosive Canal issue, however, could, at some point, touch off a rerun of the popular riots of January 1964, which might embolden Arias and the extremists to act, separately or jointly.

55. In Bolivia the fragility of the existing military government, the depth of animosity among various groups of the population, the traditions of violence, and the existence of numerous armed aggregations add up to the possibility of insurgent action from a number of directions. Two groups are perhaps most worthy of mention. The extreme rightists of the Socialist Falange appear to have a sizable force ready for action, but for the moment are uncertain of their cause. Juan Lechín's National Leftist Revolutionary Party (which is just that) has a ready cause, but seems presently to lack the necessary forces for bold action.

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56. There is no ready antidote to the actual or potential threat of violence and insurgency in Latin America. For the short term, improving the capabilities of the police and military will increase the odds against a successful insurgency. In some countries, however, such programs might serve to keep the lid on for some time, but that might make the explosion bigger when it finally comes. Programs of development and reform, along the lines of the Alliance for Progress, will tend over the long run to reduce the prospects for violent social explosions, but in some countries increased tensions may follow from disappointments over the slow pace of promised improvements.

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