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DRAFT BRIEFING NOTES

18 February 1963

WEAPONS

- I. In general, the Cubans appear to be following the textbook for guerrillas in regard to provision of arms. We have strong evidence, from numerous sources, that they are telling the guerrilla warfare students and their leaders to obtain their own weapons at home. We have enough reports and some good evidence, however, that there are just enough exceptions to prove the rule.
- A. Our agent who was in the original group of Brazilian trainees said he was trained exclusively in the use and maintenance of the Garand M-1 and M-3 rifles and the Browning and Hotchkiss machineguns--all US weapons. His group was told that these were the weapons Brazilian guerrillas would be able to buy, steal, or take from the security forces at home.
- B. Similarly the Argentine trainee mentioned earlier said their instructors told them Cuba would not be sending weapons because there was a plentiful source of supply for any determined guerrilla movement in its own homeland.

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- C. Leaders of militant groups in Venezuela, Brazil, and Peru who have gone to Cuba seeking assistance have been told by the Cuban leaders that Cuba is willing to furnish funds, training, and technical assistance. Reference to weapons is pointedly omitted. This is reported to us by our agents in these same groups.
- D. We have within the past month again checked with all of our stations in Latin America to review what evidence we have of arms shipments from Cuba. There are several cases of radio transmitters admittedly brought in from Cuba (although in Venezuela so much radio equipment was stolen last fall this was unnecessary). I have already mentioned the weapons bought in Mexico for Guatemala with money from Cuba. In Peru, the guerrilla trainees who were rounded up in the Huampani-Satipo incident last March had been issued kits containing a Czech rifle with a pistol grip, apparently of bloc origin.
- E. Otherwise, however, in case after case guerrilla hardware turned out to have been bought or stolen locally, or smuggled in from the adjoining country. We do not have a single case where we are certain of the Cuban origin of captured arms.

-2-

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II. This is not to say that we are positive weapons have not been sent from Cuba. Latin America has a long tradition of smuggling, a long coastline, innumerable isolated landing fields and drop zones, and inadequate security forces to control all such channels.

A. Last July a source in Costa Rica informed us that he had just helped unload a shipment of 30 rifles from Cuba. We sent a reliable agent back with the source to locate the rifles, but apparently they had already been removed and hidden.

B. A Venezuelan Communist leader has been telling guerrilla leaders that Cuba will soon send them mortars. It is always possible, of course, that he is fabricating to build up the morale of his units, but we must also conclude that if he is indeed making this up, he risks inevitable disillusionment.

III. In summary, then, we have no hard proof that Cuba is sending weapons to Latin American insurgents. We have evidence that in principle Cuba does not intend to do so at present. But we have no reason to believe that they will not or cannot if they feel it necessary to do so.

-3-

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