



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

August 9, 1966

TO : ARA/IAS - George T. Lister  
FROM : P/MS - <sup>WAB</sup>William Bradford (Ext. 2645 or 5223)  
SUBJECT : Taping session for Washington Tapes

In accordance with our telephone conversation today, I have told Washington Tapes that you are willing to discuss the following questions for a fifteen-minute educational tape recording:

Communism in Latin America

How widespread is it?  
What is Castro's influence? Russia's? China's?  
Is it Russian or Italian or Chinese Communism or is it indigenous to South America?  
Does the political stability of a country affect Communist activities?  
What is the OAS doing to combat Communism?  
What are we doing to prevent its spread?  
How do the South American countries react to our efforts?

You will indicate when your schedule permits you to make this recording.

P/MS:WABradford:srf

COMMUNISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Any 15 minute discussion of the subject of "Communism in Latin America" must be limited to generalities. Therefore, it would be well to emphasize at the very outset how misleading and superficial such generalities can be in treating a subject as complex as this. First of all, there are approximately 240,000,000 people living in the 20 countries of Latin America discussed here. No two of these countries are identical, of course, and some are totally different from others. What a contrast, for example, between the history and way of life of the Dominican Republic and Chile, or of Haiti and Mexico! Furthermore, there are enormous differences inside each country, differences which are probably more profound and startling than any which can be found inside the United States. Rio de Janeiro is one of the great cosmopolitan harbors of the world, with many miles of modern architecture, and in the interior of Brazil, thousands of miles up the Amazon River, there are aborigines who still live the life of prehistoric man. Lima is a proud center of intellectual and cultural life, with a university established a century before our own first university, Harvard, and yet millions of Peruvian Indians, the



Indians, the descendants of the Incas, still live well outside the mainstream of the national life of that country. Many of them do not even speak Spanish.

You already know these facts, of course. I mention them here only to remind you of how vast and complex and paradoxical an area we are discussing when we refer to "Latin America".

One other point of clarification. The following discussion refers only to the 19 Latin American countries which are members of the Organization of American States, plus Cuba. Our discussion does not include the recently established independent state of Guyana (former British Guiana), which is a member of the British Commonwealth, nor does it include Jamaica, the French islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, etc. This qualification has some significance, because the Communists are certainly active in some of these other areas.

We should also make clear at the very outset exactly what we mean by Communists and Communist movements. We do not include here all leftists; many Latin American leftists are not Communists, and some are anti-Communist. There are many non-Communist political and intellectual groups in Latin America which are urging and seeking profound and sweeping economic and

economic and social changes. When we refer to Communists in this discussion we mean only those persons who are actually members of Communist parties or who at least regard themselves as Communists. It is useful to emphasize and remember this definition because there is much confusion and fuzzy thinking on this point, and many Latin Americans tend to believe that we pin the Communist label on anyone who supports revolutionary change, or who is critical of United States policies. This is simply untrue. Let me emphasize, we realize full well that the majority of Latin Americans who think of themselves as leftists are not Communists. Unfortunately for the purposes and convenience of our discussion, it is not always easy to determine whether a party should be designated as Communist or not. But in most cases it is not too difficult to distinguish between a Communist and non-Communist party.

So much for these few introductory remarks of clarification on our subjects, Latin America and Communism.

Now what about present Communist strength in Latin America, and what are Communist chances for the future? Of course, only one of the 20 Latin American countries, Cuba, is under Communist control at present. In some countries, such as Chile and

as Chile and Uruguay, the Communist Party is legal and well established. In others, such as Nicaragua and Paraguay, it is illegal and its activities are necessarily limited to clandestine operations. If we calculate Communist strength solely on the basis of party membership, we see that the Cuban, Chilean and Argentine parties are among the largest numerically. The Cuban party claims about 50,000 members, the Chilean party is estimated at 30,000, and Argentine party membership is estimated at about 65,000 members. Although technically legal, the Argentine Communist Party was not allowed to participate in <sup>the</sup> 1965 national elections.

Another basis for estimating Communist strength and influence is the percentage of the vote obtained in elections. There are, of course, no elections in Cuba, <sup>B</sup> but in Chile the Communist Party <sup>gained</sup> ~~received~~ 12% of the votes in the 1965 congressional elections there. From the small percentage of votes the Communists <sup>receive</sup> ~~obtain~~ in Latin America, it seems clear that they are not likely to win an outright single handed victory in a popular election there within the near future. However, it should be noted that the Communists can sometimes raise these percentages considerably by running candidates in coalition

with other

This would tend to imply that Communist electoral followings, though small, may reach the 12% obtained in Chile. Shouldn't it be pointed out how much ~~weaker~~ the Comm's have been electorally elsewhere?



with other parties. For example, Salvador Allende, the Chilean Socialist leader who was the candidate of the Communist-Socialist coalition in the Chilean national elections of 1964, received 39% of the total vote.

But party membership and popular vote are not the only standards for measuring Communist strength and possibilities for gaining power, either legally or illegally. The problem is much more complex than that. Political instability is a chronic ailment of some Latin American countries. Over the past 25 years, for example, Ecuador has had five changes of government outside of established constitutional procedure. During the past 36 years, there have been no less than 111 illegal, or at least unscheduled, changes of Latin American governments. Such political instability provides all extremist elements, including the Communists, with numerous opportunities to seize power by force.

In addition, regardless of the degree of political stability presently prevailing in one or another Latin American country, profound social and economic forces are at work throughout the entire area, bringing dramatic changes and imposing relentless strains and stresses which disrupt the old, traditional ways of life and transform the political, economic and

economic and social structures of these nations. Latin America's population explosion, the highest rate of growth of any area in the world, is bringing an increase of about 3% every year. 50% of Latin Americans are less than 18 years old. How much food will there be for these many millions of new Latin Americans? How rapidly can Latin American educational facilities be expanded to meet the demands of this population explosion? With the continual shift of population from rural to urban areas, many of the great Latin American cities have been surrounded by large ugly belts of slums with a high rate of unemployment and underemployment. All of these changes, these stresses and strains, confront ~~an~~ even the most effective and efficient Latin American governments with enormous problems which do not lend themselves to easy or quick solutions. At the same time, there is a noticeable rise in aspirations and expectations, a growing conviction that the poverty, ignorance and isolation of past centuries are no longer necessary. This ferment and desire for change is probably most apparent among intellectuals and students, but it also includes many political, religious and business circles, and is extending ~~even~~ to some of the poorest and most ignorant sectors of the population. The communications explosion is partly responsible for this. Indians in remote areas previously isolated from even the slightest

slightest contact with the capital can now listen daily to its radio broadcasts over transistor sets. These same sets also carry the inflammatory programs of Havana, Moscow and Communist China, not only in Spanish and Portuguese, but also in Quechua.

In circumstances like these the bare statistics of Communist membership or votes may have little relevance. In a country with large masses of poor and ignorant people, with a very small and weak middle class, with a long history of political oppression and economic exploitation, and with powerful economic and social forces at work, it is to be expected that there will be much unrest, and that foreign and local Communists will seek to exploit such unrest for their own purposes.

Now of course the international Communist movement is not as dominated and controlled by Moscow as it was during the days of Stalin. And there is a savage and complicated fight for power and influence among various contending Communist parties and groups. Inevitably, this power struggle has affected the Latin American Communists, as well, and some parties and factions are closer to Moscow while others favor Peking. At the same time, Castro seeks to advance his own interests from Havana,



from Havana, vying with other Latin American Communist parties, quarreling openly with Peking and sometimes rubbing Moscow the wrong way. Soviet-Chinese rivalry frequently assumes the form of disputes over tactics, with pro-Peking elements usually taking a more aggressive stance in favor of direct and violent action, and accusing the "orthodox" Moscow oriented parties and factions of compromising or cooperating with the imperialists. But it should be emphasized that, regardless of differences over tactics or methods, none of the various Communist parties or groups have given any indication of abandoning their long range goal of establishing new Communist dictatorships and of extending their power and influence by whatever means promises to be most successful. In the last analysis, Communist tactics are tailored to fit a given situation, or at least to fit what one or another group interprets a situation to be. In Chile, a country with more political stability than most in Latin America, the legal and relatively large Communist Party has not been attempting to seize power by violence. In Venezuela, on the other hand, Communist guerrilla bands and urban terrorists have been operating for several years against the democratically elected Government. Havana has not only  
openly supported

openly supported these operations with money and equipment, but has also provided extensive training to the Venezuelans, as well as to many other Latin Americans. And in April, 1965, an Italian Communist courier carrying over \$250,000 in U.S. currency, <sup>presumably</sup> supplied by Moscow, was arrested at Caracas airport before he could reach the local Communists. <sup>These</sup> Venezuelan Communist <sup>to seize power</sup> efforts have been defeated and reduced, although they have not been entirely eliminated. A number of other countries, including Guatemala, Colombia and Peru, have also been contending with guerrilla movements of lesser significance, and of course the Dominican Communists made a serious bid for power during last year's crisis in that country.

At <sup>the</sup> ~~this~~ moment none of these countries appear to be in imminent danger of a Communist takeover. As regards, Soviet-Chinese rivalry, it seems clear that Moscow's influence outweighs Peking's at this time in Latin America. Castroism undoubtedly has lost much of its original dramatic and emotional appeal in Latin America, and there is considerable evidence of disillusionment and disgust with the Havana regime among many Latin Americans who were enthusiastic supporters several years ago. This is due in part to Castro's obvious <sup>economic</sup> failures in

failures in Cuba, the excesses of his rule, and possibly to a growing conviction, or at least suspicion, that there is a better way to solve Latin America's problems.

As regards Communist hopes and plans for the future, it is relevant to refer to the so-called Tri-Continental Conference, which was held in Havana from January 3 to 15 of this year. This was, among other things, an attempt to increase coordination of Communist efforts in the three continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Without going into any detail on the background and results of the Havana Conference, suffice it to say that delegations from about 80 countries attended, along with representatives of various important Communist front organizations. It would be incorrect to say that this Communist promoted and dominated meeting ~~was~~ was under the complete control of <sup>Cuba</sup> Moscow, <sup>since</sup> but certainly Soviet representatives played an important role there, <sup>as did</sup> along with the Chinese. <sup>But</sup> and, of course, the Cuban hosts / <sup>did manage to stack many delegations</sup> The conference <sup>in their favor</sup> sounded an extremely aggressive line in favor of violent revolutionary activity in Latin America, <sup>and</sup> most of the speeches were openly militant. For example, in the closing speech Castro asserted that conditions suitable for revolutionary armed battle existed in <sup>almost all</sup> many Latin American nations. He noted that this battle was already underway in Venezuela,



Venezuela, Peru, Colombia and Guatemala, and he advocated the extension of armed struggle to many additional specific countries. The Conference approved a large number of resolutions and established a <sup>secretariat</sup> (permanent organization) with its temporary headquarters in Havana, <sup>to draw up plans for an organization</sup> to unite and coordinate so-called liberation and revolutionary struggles, <sup>on a worldwide basis;</sup> A separate "Latin American Solidarity Organization" was also set up for similar purposes.

In summary, then, Latin America presents numerous opportunities for foreign and local Communists to exploit to their own advantage, and there is every indication that they are determined to continue their attempts to do so, in one form or another.

Now let us consider very briefly some of the things the United States Government is doing to try to help meet the problem of Communism in Latin America. First of all, we are convinced that the best and most enduring solutions are those which attack the causes and sources of Communism, rather than simply combatting its surface manifestations. Thus, in accordance with the objectives and programs of the Alliance for Progress, we are trying to assist and stimulate the development of the kind of economic and social progress and reform which should produce more democratic, stable and modern societies in Latin America over the long run. The Alliance was certainly not solely,

not solely, or even mainly, a response to the Communist danger, but it is clearly relevant to our discussion. The Alliance has now completed its first five years, following its inception in August, 1961, at Punta del Este, in Uruguay. Many of its material accomplishments during that time were made possible through direct United States assistance or through multi-lateral agencies to which the United States is a heavy contributor. For example, over 14 million textbooks have been developed and distributed, 13 million school children and 3 million pre-school children participate in school lunch programs. 28,000 classrooms have been built, including facilities at 59 universities in 16 countries. 300,000 houses have been built or are being built. 14,000 miles of roads have been constructed or improved. Also, as you know, the Alliance places much emphasis on mutual assistance and on self-help. Some Latin American countries have achieved outstanding successes in various fields. Bolivia, with the help of U.S. technology, has increased its gross agricultural production by 25% since 1960. A 20% increase has been achieved in Chilean primary and secondary school enrollment <sup>during the year of 1965</sup>. In Peru, nearly 200,000 people have received more than 1,5 million acres of farmland under the agrarian reform law.

There have been



There have been, of course, many shortcomings in the implementation of the Alliance for Progress by every government involved including our own, and the Alliance represents by no means a solution to all the complex and enormous problems which confront Latin America. Nevertheless the Alliance is a serious and constructive effort to help Latin Americans help themselves along the road of democratic progress and development, which, by the way, is not an easy road. We are now spending approximately one billion dollars a year in connection with the Alliance, and the countries of Latin America are providing a total of an additional nine billion. At this point it is fair to say that the Alliance is now out of the formative stage and is on the threshold of new, more productive programs.

Obviously, protection against Communist violence and aggression is also essential for the countries of Latin America if they are to have the time and opportunity to build stronger and more democratic societies. Our armed forces have been performing an invaluable service in holding the line against Communist aggression in Europe and Asia since World War II. But meanwhile, our military and police assistance programs have been helping to provide Latin American countries with the kind of equipment and training necessary for maintaining domestic public order and for legitimate purposes of national defense. *It is noteworthy that these programs are for Latin*



for Latin America total approximately 100 million dollars a year, in comparison to the one billion dollars a year we are spending on the Alliance for Progress. It should also be noted that our military assistance programs include efforts to increase the involvement of the Latin American military in domestic civic action programs, that is, peaceful activities such as road building, which will contribute to the economic and social development of the country, and will give the military and police an opportunity to play a more positive, creative role.

Any discussion of Communism in Latin America should also include a reference to the important role of the Organization of American States--the OAS--the hemisphere's major regional organization within the framework of the United Nations Charter. The OAS was established at the 9th International Conference of American States, which met in Bogota in 1948. It represented the logical outgrowth of an Inter-American System dating back to 1890. Provisions for collective security are set forth in the OAS Charter and in the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, known as the Rio Treaty, signed in 1947.

The OAS has taken a number of specific measures against efforts by

efforts by Moscow, Peking and Havana to extend Communist control in Latin America. At the 8th Meeting of Consultation of OAS Foreign Ministers, held in Uruguay in 1962, Cuba's Communist Government was declared incompatible with the inter-American system and excluded from participation in that system. It was also agreed that arms trade with Cuba should be suspended immediately. The OAS Council was instructed to guard against the threat of international Communism and a Special Consultative Committee on Security was established. Since that date both bodies have made a number of concrete recommendations to member governments on measures to control and combat Communism.

In October 1962 the OAS Council called for the immediate dismantling and withdrawal from Cuba of all missile and offensive weapons, installed with the assistance of the Soviet Union. This resolution was accompanied by effective blockade and surveillance measures to prevent further offensive arms from reaching Cuba and to verify the liquidation of the missile sites already established.

The 9th Meeting of Consultation of the OAS Foreign Ministers, held in Washington in 1964, condemned and warned the Government of Cuba for its acts of aggression and subversion against Venezuela, and agreed that those member states not  
having already

having already done so should suspend diplomatic relations with Cuba as well as all trade and maritime transportation, with certain humanitarian exceptions.

More recently, in February 1966, the OAS Council condemned the abovementioned Tri-Continental Conference as an act of aggression and intervention against the American states. The Lavalle Committee of the Council is now completing a study of that conference including recommendations for counter-measures.

It should be noted that the OAS is the major coordinating agency for the Alliance for Progress.

These, then, are a few of the more salient features of Communist activity in Latin America, as well as some of the responses to such activity on the part of Latin American countries and the United States. Many significant aspects of this subject have been omitted, for lack of time.

In conclusion it would probably be well to emphasize once more that although recent Communist efforts have failed, the opportunities for future efforts will remain until such time as much more significant progress has been achieved in dealing with the basic problems of Latin America, some of which have been briefly mentioned. We are concentrating mainly on trying to help promote positive, peaceful solutions. Many times



our efforts are unsuccessful; usually they are only partially successful. There is much criticism in Latin America of our performance. Some of this criticism is informed, objective and constructive. And some of it is prejudiced, malicious and based entirely on misinformation. Of course, Latin Americans also disagree bitterly among themselves as to the best policies and tactics to pursue. Amidst all of this ferment and confusion, however, several things are quite clear. First, profound changes are transforming Latin America today. Secondly, the major responsibility for solving Latin American problems lies with Latin Americans, themselves. We should not, indeed we cannot, assume this responsibility for them. Nevertheless, it is obviously in our own interest to assist the development of Latin America along the path of genuine political, economic and social democracy.