

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

4 February 1959

Brig. General Robert E. Cushman, Jr., USMC
Assistant to the Vice President for
National Security Affairs
361 Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Mr. Dulles believes that you and
possibly the Vice President would be
interested in reading the attached
situation report.

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Executive Officer

Attachment

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4 February 1959 ✓

TO: The Director

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1. One month after the fall of Batista the situation in Cuba is far from stable. Lacking dynamic positive leadership the Provisional Government appears to be floundering while the political, economic, labor and educational problems of the nation cry for solution.

2. Although there exists a surface calm the political situation can actually be described as tense. The Directorio Revolucionario is still smarting from the cavalier treatment received from Castro in early January. Prio Socorras and his autenticos while giving lip service to unity appear to be biding their time. The 26 July though valiant in battle is putting up a poor show in facing up to the problems and responsibilities of peace.

3. The Provisional Government under the  leadership of Manuel Urrutia is making very little progress in returning the country to normalcy. Many Ministers such as Miro Cardona, Armando Hart, et al, frustrated and exasperated by Urrutia unwillingness to make important decisions are on the verge of resigning. Adding to the problem is the relative youth and inexperience of a great many top leaders of the Government.

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4. Labor unrest is increasing. Unemployment has reached serious proportions with considerable grumbling on the part of many of the poorer elements -- such as lottery vendors -- who a month ago welcomed the fall of Batista. Construction is at a standstill. The Hilton and perhaps other luxury hotels may be forced to close unless the casinos reopen and tourists return.

5. The Civil Service is demoralized and the military establishments rendered ineffective by lack of leadership and trained personnel. Hundreds of professional officers of Batista's Army are under detention while others have been discharged from the service without justifiable cause. The Rebel Army, composed for the most part of uneducated farm boys and youthful non-professional commanders, is incapable of filling the void brought about by the disintegration of the Cuban Army. Fidel Castro has shown no desire to buckle down to the responsibilities of his position as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.

6. The country is still suffering from the emotional jag which followed the flight of Batista. Passions are kept alive by the war criminal trials, by anti-United States press attacks and by talks of crusades against the remaining dictators in the Caribbean area.

7. Crime is on the increase. An effective police force is yet to be established. The situation in the universities can be described as chaotic. For example, on 2 February, students of the Medical School of Havana University seized the school and decreed that only 20 of 157 professors will be permitted to return to the faculty. Private universities remain closed.

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8. As a result of the foregoing, many groups which supported Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement, including Ortodoxos, Priistas, as well as members of 26 July itself, are becoming increasingly concerned over the failure of revolutionary leaders to take constructive actions to solve the many problems facing the Government of Cuba.

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9. The 26 July which has been endeavoring to go it alone may soon find itself forced to take into Government, labor and the military experienced leaders of other political parties and groups or face the real danger of public disorder and an economic crisis. The glamour of the Sierra Maestra and the straggly beards is rapidly wearing off as the realities of the situation daily become more apparent.

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