



CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED
1997

CUBA

Opposition elements are maintaining their campaign against the Castro government through a variety of activities. [REDACTED] reporting the sabotage of transportation and communication links and the burning of government installations and sugar-cane fields indicate that such activity is most frequent in Las Villas Province, but that it is also taking place in the other five provinces. [REDACTED] a total of about 4,100 tons of sugar cane had been burned, presumably by saboteurs. A source who recently escaped from Cuba said that an opposition group has detailed plans for the sabotage of Cuban oil refineries around Havana.

Fighting is continuing in the Escambray Mountains, al-

though reports of government seizures of supplies intended for opposition forces and the transfer of government troop units to other areas suggest that anti-Castro operations there have been considerably reduced.

Castro's 4 March speech, delivered at ceremonies marking the first anniversary of the explosion of an ammunition ship in Havana harbor with a large number of casualties, blamed the United States for all activity against his regime and taunted the anti-Castro exiles for not attempting to invade Cuba and reinforce the guerrilla bands, which he claimed are being "mopped up" in Las Villas and Oriente provinces. He ridiculed attempts to supply opposition forces by means of air drops and said that the regime had

captured all such materiel and would soon exhibit it in Havana so that foreign newspapermen and diplomats could view it and "decide to whom it belongs and who intervenes in affairs of others."

President Dorticos, addressing the first Latin American plantation workers' conference in Havana on 4 March, frankly exhorted the delegates to follow the Cuban example on agrarian reform in their own countries--a statement sharply contrasting with the Castro regime's recent protestations to other Latin American governments that the Cuban revolution would not be "exported" to their countries.

[REDACTED], who is regarded as the most knowledgeable Latin American ambassador still assigned to Havana, recently told Foreign Ministry officials in [REDACTED] that he believes anti-Castro activity in Cuba will shortly be intensified. He said that Cuba's economic situation was "crumbling" and that many of Castro's aides were deserting him.

While [REDACTED]'s report on the economic situation is probably exaggerated, it is clear that Castro's opposition is becoming bolder, and [REDACTED] much of the opposition activity throughout Cuba

is led by personnel who defected from Castro's armed forces or other government entities.

Cuba's circular note of late February welcoming Latin American efforts to mediate differences between the United States and Cuba elicited a response from the Frondizi government in Argentina announcing its intention to send special envoys to Havana and Washington in order to seek means of easing tensions between the two countries. This action was probably intended as a gesture to impress public opinion both at home and abroad, inasmuch as, among the large Latin American countries, Argentina has been the strongest critic of Cuba and has supported only multilateral consideration of the Cuban problem. Argentina as well as most other Latin American countries criticized a recent Ecuadorean mediation offer inspired mainly by propaganda motives.

Argentine officials asserted that the Frondizi government wanted to demonstrate that all the possibilities of negotiating the return of the Castro regime to the inter-American system had been exhausted. Cuba declined the Argentine offer on 8 March, basing its action on the assertion that the US "does not want to sit down and talk" about its differences with Cuba or reduce hemisphere tensions, as Castro charged in his 4 March speech. [REDACTED]