

SITUATION REPORTS - VENEZUELA

1. Report prepared on 11 December 1961

a. Disturbances in Caracas continued throughout the evening of 7 December in the 23 de Enero housing development, in El Cementario and in Avenida Sucre.

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] As of 7 December, some schools of the Central University had already closed for early vacations, despite the attempts of leftist students to prevent this action. An open letter, signed by Venezuelan educators, protesting Government attacks against students and the Venezuelan people, appeared in the press. In the early morning of 8 December another municipal policeman was killed and a gasoline station was attacked. Although there was little activity during the day, there were disturbances in the El Conde and Simon Rodriguez areas of Caracas in the evening of 8 December. Police dispersed a group of students attempting to burn an effigy of President Kennedy. On 9 December there were no violent disturbances but anti-Government, anti-Kennedy fliers were distributed outside a theater in Caracas. As of 10 December, the Venezuelan Government had not yet detained any extremist leaders and had not reached a decision as to whether or not to detain extremist leaders who have Congressional immunity.

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] Guards were posted around Dutch businesses.

b.

[REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

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[REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

c. Leaders of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) in Zulia have said that the MIR plans to revolt against the Venezuelan Government in December. The PCV was invited to join but refused because it feels this is not the right time for a revolt. The PCV fears it may become involved against its wishes if the MIR goes ahead with its plans. The visit of President Kennedy was not mentioned in connection with the MIR revolt plans.

d. Cardinal Quintero has agreed to issue a pastoral letter to all Catholic churches in Venezuela, calling on the clergy and laity to pray for the success of the Kennedy visit and to discourage any hostile activity. This message was to be read at all masses in all churches on 10 December. Civic committees have been formed to assure the widest possible support for the visit of President Kennedy. These committees include outstanding and influential Venezuelans who are gaining the support of representatives of all media, press associations, the Pro-Venezuela Association, labor, youth, intellectuals, civic and professional groups. Romulo Gallegos has promised full cooperation with this effort and President Betancourt has approved the plan. Funds are being raised from

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private Venezuelan sources and plans are being made for leaflet, media, wall-painting, telephone, poster, and banner campaigns. The public relations committee of the North American Association has also formed a group which is planning a publicity campaign to insure the success of the visit.

e. The general tone of the Venezuelan press has improved considerably since 6 December. Pro-Kennedy signs are appearing on the walls in Caracas and many anti-Kennedy signs are being defaced. The press has given heavy play to the speech made by President Betancourt asking the Venezuelan public to welcome President Kennedy and to prevent extremist disturbances. A leader of the Social Christian Party (COPEI) said the COPEI will go all the way to insure a good reception for President Kennedy. In an obvious warning, but without mentioning the visit of President Kennedy, an editorial in La Republica listed reasons why the PCV should be declared illegal.

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