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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

The Latin American Solidarity Organization Conference

Secret

No. 45

22 September 1967
No. 0308/67B

State Dept. review completed

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THE LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION CONFERENCE

The first conference of the Latin American Solidarity Organization (LASO) held in Havana from 31 July to 10 August, provided an ideal forum for the propagation of Fidel Castro's militant revolutionary theories. Whether Castro's doctrine can be translated into increased Communist "solidarity" and effective programs, however, remains to be seen. Disunity was evident during the many months of preparations for the meeting as well as at the conference itself. Indeed, the meeting took place at a time when quarreling among the Latin American Communists was at an all-time high.

The conference apparently did nothing to ease relations between pro-Moscow and pro-Castro parties in the hemisphere. These groups remain at odds over whether to resort to armed struggle in the near future, and over Cuban attempts to control the Communist movements in Latin America. Neither did it do anything to improve Cuban-Soviet relations. Moreover, even if plans were discussed for major new guerrilla efforts in the hemisphere, nothing is likely to happen soon.

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In short, the LASO conference is not likely soon to lead to significant Communist advances in the hemisphere. Communist gains will depend a good deal more on the relative political and economic stability in each country than on Havana's efforts to export its brand of revolution.

Background

The Latin American Solidarity Organization was founded by 27 militant Latin American delegations in January 1966 immediately after the Tri-Continent Conference in order to "coordinate the struggle against US imperialism." In August 1966, an organizing

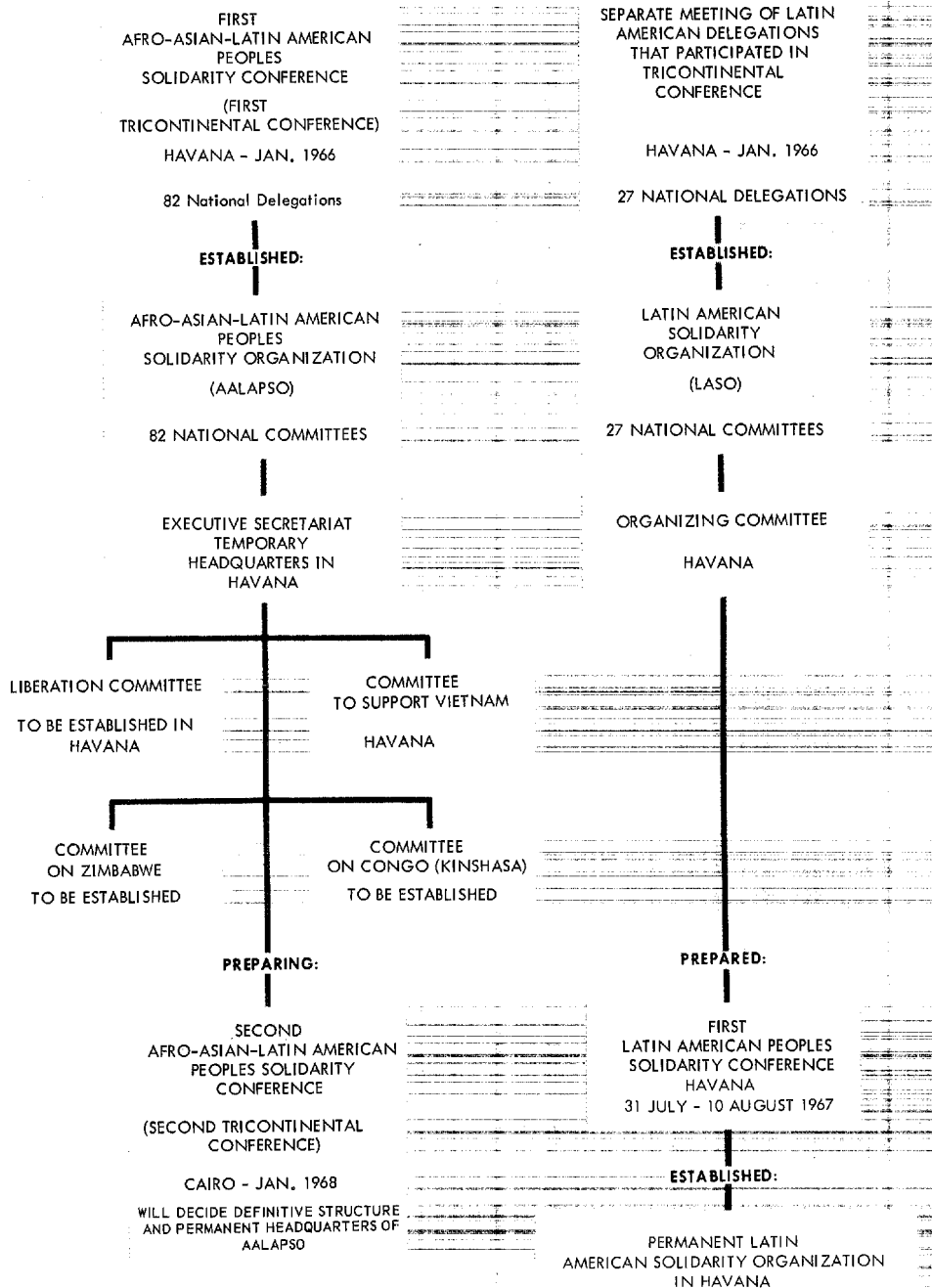
committee consisting of representatives from Cuba, Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela met to plan for the 1967 conference. In October, this committee issued a draft agenda, inspired by Castro's militant foreign policy, which called for discussion of a common strategy of armed

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DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRO-ASIAN-LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION (AALAPSO) AND THE LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION (LASO)



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insurrection for all Latin American revolutionary movements. It also issued a call for the creation of national LASO committees in the various Latin American countries.

The formation of these committees, which sent delegates to the recent conference, caused great problems in several countries. The obvious pro-Castro tone of the conference preparations caused the pro-Soviet parties of Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Ecuador to decide against sending a delegation, thus leaving the field clear to the local pro-Castro extremists. Other pro-Soviet parties--the Chilean and Colombian for example--debated the question but finally decided to attend. In any case, by conference time delegates from all 27 countries--representing either the orthodox parties, pro-Castro splinter groups, pro-Chinese organizations, or just themselves--had arrived in Havana.

The Conference

Cuban propaganda focused from the beginning on the conference slogan, "the duty of every revolutionary is to make revolution." This phrase was attributed to "Che" Guevara, who was made the spiritual leader of the gathering. This Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary, who dropped from sight in March 1965, was elected first citizen of Latin America, and his activities, "wherever he is," were praised by all delegates.

In further propaganda moves, recently captured "North American insurgents" were twice displayed as "proof" of US activities against Cuba. Because of this propaganda effort and the Cubans' argument that their advocacy of "armed struggle" was based on the tenet that "reactionary oppression" must be met with "patriotic revolutionary violence," the Cubans were able to outmaneuver the pro-Moscow Communists. Even the most orthodox of the pro-Moscow Communists were forced to admit that "armed struggle" would probably have to be used ultimately in each country in order to achieve political power.

Contrary to what had been expected in view of the obvious conflict in ideology between pro-Castro and pro-Moscow Communists, only two disputes over the proposed wording of resolutions came to the attention of the public. The first--which caused a brief furor--was over a committee resolution condemning the orthodox Communist Party of Venezuela for its policy of "via pacifica," or the peaceful way to power. This formulation which did not appear in the final declarations, represented, of course, a direct attack on the position of all pro-Soviet parties.

The most serious disagreement did not surface until the night of 8 August when Armando Hart, organizational secretary of the Cuban Communist Party central committee and chairman of the Cuban LASO delegation, tabled a resolution

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**LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION
CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS**

<u>Country</u>	<u>Delegation Chairman</u>	<u>Important Organizations Represented</u>	<u>Representatives (approx. total)</u>
Argentina	John William Cooke	Peronist Revolutionary Movement Communist Youth Federation Movement of National Liberation Argentine Movement for Vietnam Peronist Revolutionary Youth	26
Bolivia	Aldo Flores	Bolivian Communist Party Armed Forces of National Liberation	7
Brazil	Aluzio Palhano	Dissident Brazilian Communist Party National Revolutionary Movement Popular Action	9
Chile	Jorge Montes	Communist Party of Chile Socialist Party	28
Colombia	Pedro Gutierrez	Communist Party of Colombia Army of National Liberation Worker-Student-Peasant Movement Communist Youth of Colombia	25
Costa Rica	Alvara Montero	Popular Vanguard Party Authentic Revolutionary Party Socialist Action Party	9
Cuba	Armando Hart	Cuban Communist Party	-
Dominican Republic	Gerardo Sanchez	Dominican Popular Movement 14th of June Revolutionary Movement	13
Ecuador	Anibal Munoz	Communist Party of Ecuador Revolutionary Socialist Party Leftist Revolutionary Movement	8
El Salvador	Schafik Jorge Handal	Communist Party of El Salvador Revolutionary Party of April & May	28
Guadeloupe	Henri Delagua	General Association of Students	6
Guatemala	Nestor Valle	Guatemalan Workers Party Rebel Armed Forces	7
French Guiana	Robo Jean Marie	Guianese Progressive Party	4
Guyana	Lall Bahadur	Peoples Progressive Party	4
Haiti	Andre Feray	Party of Popular Accord Haitian United Democratic Party	7
Honduras	Hector Martinez	Honduran Communist Party Revolutionary Party of Honduras	7
Martinique	Eduard Delepine	General Confederation of Workers Communist Party of Martinique	5
Mexico	Heberto Castillo	Communist Party of Mexico Movement of National Liberation	27
Nicaragua	Fernando Martinez	Sandinista National Liberation Front Nicaraguan Socialist Party	16
Panama	Floyd Britton	People's Party Movement of Revolutionary Unity	12
Paraguay	Francisco Mendez	Communist Party of Paraguay	11
Peru	Gregorio Arce	Movement of Revolutionary Left Revolutionary Vanguard Peruvian Communist Party/China	14
Puerto Rico	Juan Mari Bras	Puerto Rican Independence Movement	4
Surinam	H. F. Herrenberg	Nationalist Republic Party	3
Trinidad-Tobago	Clive Phill	Workers and Farmers Party	4
Uruguay	Rodney Arismendi	Communist Party of Uruguay Leftist Liberation Front Uruguayan Revolutionary Movement	29
Venezuela	Francisco Prado	Movement of Revolutionary Left Armed Forces of National Liberation	16

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condemning the policy of certain "socialist" countries that give credits and technical aid to "dictatorships" and "oligarchies" in Latin America. This description was an obvious swipe at the Soviet Union and several East European countries, which had accelerated their economic and diplomatic activity in Latin America in 1966 and have continued their effort this year.

The resolution expressed the Cuban conviction that LASO should "coordinate and give impetus to the struggle against US imperialism and other oppressive factors in Latin America." It also restated a position expounded by Castro during a speech on 13 March in which he condemned the aid and trade policies of the "socialist" countries toward Latin America. The alleged Cuban retort to pro-Soviet Communists who threatened to walk out of the conference if the resolution passed was "the doors are wide open...the time for true revolutionary definitions has come." The resolution was passed by a 15 to 3 margin with 9 abstentions. The pro-Soviets did not walk out, however, and the text was never made public.

The final conference declarations, approved on 9 August closely followed the Castro line but paid lip service to the orthodox Communists. They stated in brief that the armed revolutionary struggle is the primary path of the revolution in Latin America and that all other forms of the struggle must serve and not hinder this

line. Furthermore, guerrilla action is the immediate and primary task in the majority of Latin American countries and inevitable in the others.

Stokely Carmichael's appearance provided a much-needed publicity boost for the conference. The "black-power" advocate probably measured up to Castro's expectations by haranguing the delegates on everything from the dangers of "Yankee imperialism" to his views of Abraham Lincoln. "The next Vietnam will take place on the Latin American continent," Carmichael said. "Guerrilla warfare must begin in the US.... We will not fight in Vietnam, nor in Santo Domingo, nor anywhere else in the world. Our fight will be inside the US."

Castro's Closing Speech

After many delays, Castro finally addressed the gathering on 10 August. His speech was a major ideological statement of Cuba's foreign policy and a blueprint for solidarity with Latin American guerrillas. Although he grudgingly acknowledged the pro-Soviet Communists, stating that "in some countries violent revolution may not be an immediate, but a future task," he left no doubt that Cuba views "armed struggle" as the only valid course to achieve "national liberation." He also indicated that Cuba is prepared to advance this doctrine.

Castro publicized the Cuban conflict with the Communist Party

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LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION CONFERENCE DECLARATIONS

We, representatives of the peoples of our America, conscious of the conditions which exist on the Continent, knowing of the existence of a common counterrevolutionary strategy directed by Yankee imperialism, proclaim:

1. That it is the right and duty of the peoples of Latin America to make revolution;
2. That revolution in Latin America has its deepest historic roots in the liberation movement against European colonialism of the 19th century and against the imperialism of this century. The epic of the peoples of America and the great class battles against imperialism waged by our peoples in previous decades are the sources of historic inspiration for the Latin American revolutionary movement;
3. That the essential meaning of the revolution in Latin America is given by its confrontation of imperialism, the oligarchies, and bourgeois landowners. Consequently, the character of the revolution is that of a struggle for national independence, emancipation from oligarchies, and the socialist path for complete economic and social development;
4. That the principles of Marxism-Leninism guide the revolutionary movement of Latin America;
5. That the armed revolutionary struggle is the primary path of the revolution in Latin America;
6. That all the other forms of struggle must serve and not hinder the progress of the primary line which is armed struggle;
7. That for the majority of the countries of the Continent the problem of organizing, initiating, developing, and culminating armed struggle is today the immediate and primary task of the revolutionary movement;
8. That those countries in which this task is not being considered as an immediate task should at any rate consider it as an inevitable prospect in the development of the revolutionary struggle in their country;
9. That the people of each country and their revolutionary vanguards will have the historic responsibility for advancing the revolution in each of them;
10. That the guerrillas as the embryo of the armies of liberation is the most effective means for initiating and developing revolutionary struggle in the majority of our countries;
11. That the leadership of the revolution demands as an organizational principle the existence of a unified political and military command as a guarantee for its success;
12. That the most effective solidarity that revolutionary movements can give each other is the development and culmination of their own struggle in each country;
13. That solidarity with Cuba and collaboration and cooperation with the revolutionary movement in arms are an unavoidable duty of international type of all anti-imperialist organizations of the Continent;
14. That the Cuban revolution as a symbol of the victory of the armed revolutionary movement is the vanguard of the Latin American anti-imperialist movement. As the people who carry out armed struggle advance along that path, they also place themselves in the vanguard;
15. That the people directly colonized by the European mother countries or subjected to direct colonial domination by the United States on their way to liberation, have as their immediate and primary objective the fight for independence and the maintenance of links to the general struggle of the Continent as the only manner of avoiding being absorbed by North American neocolonialism;
16. That the second declaration of Havana, which contains the beautiful and glorious revolutionary tradition of the last 150 years of American history, is a programmatic document of the Latin American revolution which the peoples of this Continent have confirmed, deepened, enriched, and radicalized during the past five years;
17. That the peoples of Latin America have no antagonisms with any other people of the world and they extend a fraternal hand to the people of the United States themselves whom they urge to fight against the repressive policy of the imperialist monopolies;
18. That the struggle in Latin America strengthens its bonds of solidarity with the peoples of Asia and Africa, the socialist countries, and with the workers of the capitalist countries, particularly with the Negro population of the United States who simultaneously suffer class exploitation, poverty, unemployment, racial discrimination, and denial of the most elementary human rights and who are an important force to be considered in the context of revolutionary struggle;
19. That the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people gives all the peoples who fight imperialism an inestimable help and is an inspiring example for the peoples of Latin America;
20. That we have approved the statutes and created the permanent committee with headquarters in Havana of the Latin American Solidarity Organization which is the genuine representation of the peoples of America.

We, revolutionaries of our America, the America south of the Rio Bravo, successors of the men who gave us our first independence, armed with unbreakable will to fight and with revolutionary and scientific orientation, and without anything to lose but the chains that oppress us, declare that our struggle is a decisive contribution to humanity's historic struggle to liberate itself from slavery and exploitation. The duty of every revolutionary is to make revolution.

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of Venezuela (PCV) by excoriating its leaders and making various veiled references to statements by other orthodox party leaders. In all, he left little doubt that his "solidarity" with these Communists is, at best, an illusion. He lashed out at the PCV as a cowardly gang of traitors and a "mafia" of "slanderers and defamers of the Cuban revolution."

He then made a thinly disguised reference to Chilean Communist Party leader Luis Corvalan's statement--stressing the role of the national bourgeoisie--which had been published in the USSR on the eve of the LASO conference. Castro asked, "Is there anyone at this time who might believe in the revolutionary role of any bourgeoisie on this continent?"

Castro went on to declare that orthodox Communism "has acquired a method, a style, and, in certain things, not a few characteristics of a church. We sincerely believe that this character must be overcome." Answering the charge that he is nothing more than a bourgeois adventurer without revolutionary maturity, he said, "Fortunately, the revolution came before maturity because, finally, those who are mature, the super-mature, have matured so little that they have decayed."

Castro also alluded to the conference's [redacted] resolution criticizing the socialist countries who give aid to "oligarchical" Latin American governments. Referring to Soviet aid offers to Colombia (which, inci-

dentally, apparently have not been made), Castro said, "it is absurd--loans in dollars to an oligarchical government which repressed the guerrillas, which is persecuting and murdering guerrillas.... We think that this is absurd." He continued, "If internationalism exists, if solidarity is a word worthy of being uttered, the least we can expect from any state in the socialist camp is to deny financial or technical aid to any of these governments."

Ideology of "Armed Struggle"

The major emphasis of Castro's speech was on the ideology of the "armed struggle." This doctrine, which challenges the role of the orthodox national parties, is best described as the Castro-Guevara-Debray thesis. Briefly, it can be divided into three main revolutionary tenets, all cited in Castro's speech: The key to revolution in Latin America is guerrilla action, which should be initiated, developed, directed, and controlled from rural areas; there should be only one major guerrilla movement in each country, directed by a united leadership and guided by one clear strategy; and the guerrilla unit precedes the urban-based party and, in fact, ultimately evolves into the "authentic" party.

Castro proclaimed, "Let no one dream that he will achieve power peacefully in any nation of this continent. Let no one dream or attempt to tell the masses such a thing, he would be fooling them miserably.... There is a basic path/armed struggle and the rest of the means of struggle should be subordinated to it."

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On the correctness of rural-oriented guerrilla action, Castro said, "The experience acquired in guerrilla warfare on this continent has taught us many things, among them the terrible mistake, the absurd conception, that a guerrilla movement can be directed from a city.... It is our conviction that it is not only stupid, but a crime to want to direct a guerrilla movement from the city."

Castro concluded with a prediction for the future. "A revolution is seething within this continent. Its eruption might be delayed, but its outburst is inevitable.... The victory of the peoples against the injustices, exploitation, oligarchy, and imperialism, regardless of the wrong concepts which may try to change the course, is inevitable.... Real Communists will not let the revolution down, just as our revolution will never let down the Latin American revolutionary movements."

Soviet Reaction

Publicly the Soviets understandably have played down the LASO conference

For the most part, Soviet commentators have preferred to argue the merits of the USSR's "united front" policy--combined political action by all "progressive" Latin American parties, including the Communists--in each country. Critics of this policy have been described as "ultra-left-wing" groups inspired by Peking. There has been no men-

tion of the hard line taken by Castro and others at the conference.

The Soviet ambassador to Chile, Aleksandr Anikin, so far is the only Soviet official to belittle the conference publicly. He told reporters in Santiago that the LASO agreements "are of no great importance" and "probably would not be taken into consideration" by the USSR. In an apparently candid private conversation, another Soviet diplomat commented to a US official in Washington that there were no real prospects for revolution in Latin America and that Castro had been inflating the idea for his own purposes.

There is no evidence that Moscow and Havana are any less at odds since the conference, but no sign that either wants an open dispute. It appears that, as expected, each side will continue doing what it has been doing but may talk about it less. Thus, it is expected that the Soviets will continue to do what they can to maintain, and hopefully improve, their position within the Latin American revolutionary movement, but not by sacrificing the consolidation and expansion of their trade and diplomatic relations with selected established governments.

Latin American Reaction

Implementation and further discussion of the resolutions adopted at the conference have been delayed for the past month because of a decision that delegates

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could best avoid arrest by their own governments by taking circuitous routes home and delaying their arrival. Some delegates may also have remained in Havana for post-conference discussions.

A preliminary assessment of available information indicates that the conference, as expected, pleased pro-Castro groups and displeased supporters of the orthodox Moscow line. The orthodox Communist Party of Colombia (PCC), for example, was reported to be in general agreement with the conference resolutions but opposed to the Cuban position on the primacy of "armed struggle," which it viewed as only one of several methods in carrying out the revolution.

The Colombian Communists also disapproved the [redacted] resolution condemning the USSR for aiding Latin American countries, believing that it will only serve to split the revolutionary movement. On the other hand, the PCC's militant guerrilla arm was pleased with the conference and is in the process of studying new guerrilla strategy and tactics with the hope that it can intensify guerrilla activity in the near future.

In Chile, the Communist Party has scarcely even noted LASO, although its partner in the Popular Action Front, the pro-Castro Socialist Party, is strongly in favor of all conference resolutions, including the attack on the Soviet Union. The Socialists themselves, are badly

split, however, as the rebel wing led by Raul Ampuero is taking an increasingly contemptuous attitude toward the advocates of armed struggle. [redacted]

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The Uruguayan Communist movement, led by Rodney Arismendi, is in basic disagreement over the conference results. [redacted]

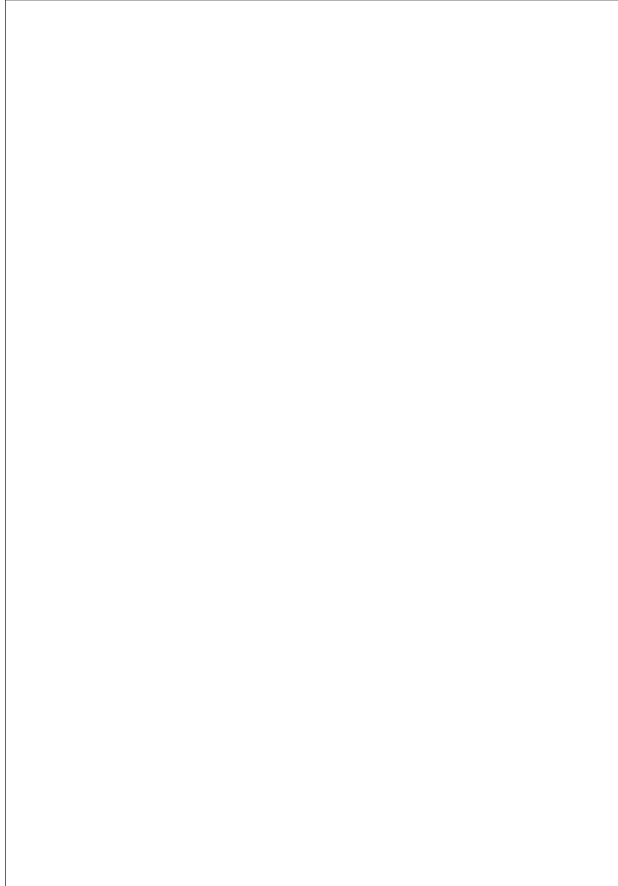
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however, that a public polemic with the Cubans over the results of the conference would be disastrous.



Outlook

The LASO conference, viewed in the context of Latin American Communism today, has clearly widened the policy rift between Cuba and the pro-Soviet parties. Although it may produce a short-term spate of propaganda that will give the impression of increased Communist activity, in the long

run the conference will probably have a detrimental effect on the pro-Soviet parties. Already largely ineffectual except in exploiting existing discontent, these parties now are torn between Castro-style militants trying to organize armed insurrection and the official Moscow-supported apparatus favoring a "united front" policy.

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What is being witnessed today is an effort to make many of the orthodox Communist parties appear to be relatively conservative in terms of the existing political pattern in the hemisphere. The real revolutionaries are those who are willing to "go to the hills." This is a problem of considerable concern to the urban-based orthodox parties, who fear that they may be supplanted by so-called "authentic" Communist parties.

In short, the trend is toward less emphasis on ideological considerations than on revolutionary action. Any immediate threat to political stability from the pro-Soviet parties in all but the most vulnerable countries may well be diminished instead of enhanced, as each party becomes more intent on preserving its influence in left-wing circles than on engaging in urban agitation.

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