

SR-39 CUBA --- Some suggestions cautiously advanced by G/SI (G/SJ)

GENERAL

I think the heart of the difficulty if any is best found in and illustrated by Section V. The thesis is that the Cuban Communists, who pan the United States by direction, and the Cuban Nationalists, who pan the US primarily to kid themselves, could get together in time of war, stress, or whenever it might embarrass the US, and thus make trouble vexatious to the US government and dangerous to US security.

The first trouble one would run into with this theory, I am inclined to suspect, would be with the Agencies--not that one gives a damn what the Agencies think, but here they might have a point. The case, in other words, is somewhat similar to that brought on by ORE 9-48 where OIR'S dissent was basically a complaint that we had overrated the bearing of Cuban politics on US security. I know, or suspect, that the authors of SR 39 merely mean to say that a strong alliance of anti-US Cubans could embarrass our government, presumably in a diplomatic rather than a military sense. I'm not sure, though, that everybody would read it that way and fear that consequently we'd get the same old complaint that Cuba is no Caribbean USSR. I think the matter ought to be explained further and better.

I also think the analysis of the Cuban Nationalist position is less than convincing. On the surface it would appear to me that these people are victims of a very human psychological condition, related to normal non-psychopathic inferiority reactions, which often cause a little man to put on an abnormally big front to show a big man that he isn't a little man. If so, I couldn't take the Cubans too seriously in this regard. The paper itself says they know perfectly well they're about as likely to get loose from US supervision as the moon is from the earth and that even if they did, they'd be nothing but a small island with a large pile of worthless sugar. So why in the world should they (a) ally themselves against the US with the Communists whom they naturally and logically don't like, or (b) conspire to embarrass the United States in a senseless exhibition of chewing off the hand that is feeding you? In short, until I am convinced to the contrary, I shall continue to suspect that Cuban nationalism as related to US security conforms to Macbeth's description of a tale told by an idiot.

Certainly I am not being so rash, in the above, as to attempt to deny any part of the conclusions. I only suspect that others will react similarly and that therefore a strengthening of the argument is needed.

Am pretty well satisfied with the Political part except for the history. The economics can be brushed up: I thought some parts confusing. Foreign Relations is virtually confined to a discussion of attitude toward the US and says about the same thing that's said frequently elsewhere. I wouldn't

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know, but should think one might be told more about these curious Caribbean relations that are always resulting in accusations that everybody is invading everybody else. The military is covered all right, but in parts, the writing leaves something to be desired. I think I'd do some more to Section V, as above, and where, by the way, is the usual Section VI on what's going to happen in the future? The present Section VI ought to be scrapped and either permanently omitted or recast on the basis of some real evidence. I forgot to mention the Summary. It ought to be a simple job of including a reference to all important elements in the paper rather than just the strategic ones. R. Mallett will handle questions, if there are any, regarding the appendixes. I glanced at the biographical sketches, by the way, and thought them excellent--but where was the picture of the fat general on the thin horse?

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Serialim (See also marginal comments).

pp. 1-2 -- This isn't the history of Cuba; it's the history of the Platt amendment. By mere chance, I happened to glance at Appendix C and read the sketch on Batista; if I hadn't done so, I'd never have realized what he means in the Cuban scheme of things. All that, and that sort of thing, ought to be noted in this Genesis portion so that readers would be impressed right off with the important factors in the background of Cuban thinking. Please do not mistake me and think I want a long, rambling account of everything that has happened in Cuba since Columbus; just specify, without any narrative, what facts and events in the past have bearing now on Cuban life. Similarly, by the way, the matter of Machado who pops up abruptly on page 2, quite unintroduced. We can't assume that readers--particularly the riff-raff who read Situation Reports--will know all or anything about the Machado affair.

P. 1-9 -- Better make sure that Parts 4 and 5 get properly reversed in the eventual typing.

Section II -- see marginal notes.

Section III - see General above.

Section IV - In my opinion ought to be pretty thoroughly overhauled. To me, at least, coming to it fresh and ignorant, there were parts that were very confusing.

Section V -- p. 1. What's this Route to India thing? Assuming you start on this round-the-world jaunt from some part in the United States, you would presumably pass Cuba on your way out to sea; then Cuban-based craft would protect you for a few miles, and then you'd get into the middle of the South Atlantic and get sunk. Wouldn't it be better to move Cuba a couple thousand miles east?

P. 1 -- These crucial problems don't sound very crucial to me. It might make a difference if the Cuban government couldn't keep order, because then we'd probably have to send in a couple of Marines to take care of the riot. The other three crucial problems leave me quite unimpressed.

P. 2 -- This matter of Nationalists needs straightening out. For example, it says here that the Nationalists are capable of filling the gear box full of wrenches at the time of our greatest vulnerability. Agreed. They are capable of it; so am I; so are you. The only question worth bothering about is whether or not we are going to do it. Before I'm going to take up my valuable time observing Cuban nationalists and being solicitous about them, I want to know -- not what they can do, but what they will do.

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Section VI -- is a total loss. This is like saying that since we know nothing whatever about the subject we'll just use our imagination. Or something like the time Groucho Marx couldn't find the missing diamonds and proceeded to draw the plans from which he could build a house in which they might be hidden.

I think the section ought to be written, and have a feeling that it would be better to make it Section II rather than VI. Reasons for thinking so is that most people seem to have the idea, right or wrong, that Cuba is the center of LA Communism and would like to know more about it. I do not, however, see any sense in all this conjecture. I should simply either (a) get some reliable information about the innerworking of the Cuban OP; or (b) admit right off that I did not have any reliable information on the subject and then detail what is known about the overt side of the picture: number of members, connections with CTAL et cetera.

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