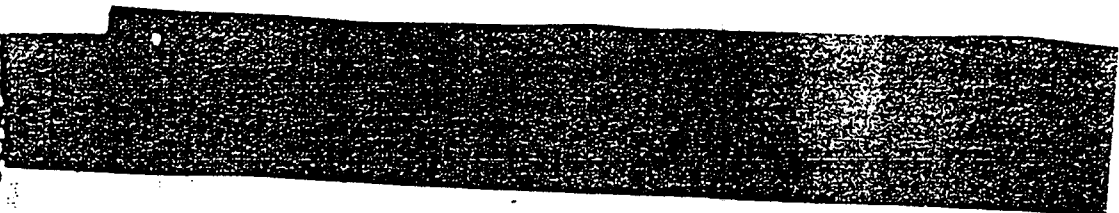


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LATIN AMERICA

10. Castro Regime Moves to Control Cuban Universities: Recent anti-Communist demonstrations in Havana by Cuban university students have evidently given impetus to Castro's plans to dominate universities and student organizations.

Most of the students at the University of Havana support the revolution, whatever their attitude toward Communism, and the Federation of University Students (FEU) there had hoped to avoid an internal split over the Communist issue. However, in line with Castro's growing insistence that anti-Communism is counterrevolution, the government-dominated leadership of the FEU now has convened special university courts to try as counterrevolutionists students who supported anti-Communist newscaster Luis Conte Aguero.

Meanwhile, a usually reliable source reports that the government is carefully choosing 2,000 students from rural areas to register at the University of Havana in the fall. All expenses will be paid for these students by the government, which will use them as shock troops to assure control of the university.

These moves have intimidated Catholic student groups who have been openly attacking Communism and will facilitate announced plans by Castro adviser Che Guevara to bring the traditionally autonomous universities under close government control.



11. Developments in Venezuelan-Cuban Relations: Venezuelan-Cuban relations, presently focused on the question of whether Venezuela will attend Fidel Castro's conference of underdeveloped nations in Havana next September, touched off considerable political conflict during Cuban Foreign Minister Roa's recent visit to Caracas. A number of official and unofficial Venezuelan press releases on this matter have been contradictory. President Betancourt, critical of Castro's policies, is believed opposed to the Cuban meeting, but strong leftist elements are pressing the government to support it.



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A Cuban mission designed to generate interest in the conference in Latin America scheduled its first stop in Caracas, probably to exploit the pro-Castro sentiment there. There are indications that Venezuelan relations with Cuba and the conference issue in particular could contribute to a split in Betancourt's majority Democratic Action party and threaten his three-party coalition.

Prior to his departure from Venezuela, Roa praised the "mutual defense pact" recently entered into by the Cuban Labor Confederation (CTC) and the Venezuelan Labor Confederation (CTV), the Communist-influenced principal labor organizations in the two countries. On the other hand, the CTV, which apparently is sympathetic toward the Castro regime, has opposed the CTC project for the establishment of a neutralist Latin American labor organization excluding US participation.

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