

December 3, 1958

**Cuban Communist Party Official Lazaro Peña, Report
to the Italian Communist Party (PCI), 'Information
on the Political Situation in Cuba'**

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Summary:

A report supplied by the Foreign Section and Cuban comrade Lazaro Pen

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a, Director of the Latin American syndicate, on the political situation in Cuba. It describes the July 26th movement, Cuban relations with the United States, and the Cuban Popular Socialist Party.

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INFORMATION ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN CUBA

Supplied from the Foreign Section, 3 December 1958 from Cuban comrade Lazaro Peña, Director of the Latin American syndicate

Political Situation of the Country

The political situation in Cuba continues to be extremely serious. The popular opposition to the bloody dictatorship of Batista is such that, after a certain time, the government may only manage to stand on its own feet with the assistance of the United States.

Batista now only rests on the support of a few restricted social classes: Cuban executives of monopolistic North American concessions [businesses], elements of the police and repression apparatus, industrialists financially connected to the United States monopolies, etc.

The opposition to the Batista regime clearly manifested itself during the political elections of 3 November, that were backed above all by the Americans with the intent to give an appearance of legitimacy to the political regime in Cuba. What resulted from these rigged elections, the victory of government candidate General Andres Rivero Aguero, was that not more than 40% of the electorate participated and in Havana not more than 25%.

In the country reigns the most savage terror of the work of a powerful police and military apparatus. Every day they commit assassinations, torture, arbitrary arrests. American FBI agents frequently participate in the interrogations of political dissidents. The police hammer away at, in a special way, the communists and their sympathizers.

The "July 26" Movement of Fidel Castro and the Developments of the Partisan Guerillas

The movement of Fidel Castro, that in its rise has had a spontaneous characteristic of anarchy and was supported essentially by the elements of the petite bourgeoisie, has today, especially in the regions where the operations of the partisans are more extensive (Oriente, Camaguey, Santa Clara etc.), a solid following of peasants⁶ and the general popular masses. The support of the peasants⁷ was due also to the fact that the Fidel Castro movement adopted as a rallying cry the need to implement agrarian reforms. Armed partisans numbered around 10,000.

Position of the United States

The United States played, for a certain period, a double game with Fidel Castro and with the dictator Batista. Today the United States seeks to intensify the help to the government in the political sphere by supporting the rigged elections of November 3rd and in the economic sphere with the provision of arms for the government troops. The risk is ever more likely that in the case that Fidel Castro's troops are pushed into the North American nickel mining concessions, the United States would take advantage of this by provoking military intervention.

The Cuban Popular Socialist Party

The Cuban Popular Socialist Party (Communist Party), even though illegal and terrorized, actively participates in the country's political life. For the most part the

comrades of the Directorate [Politburo] of the party still reside in Cuba. Periodicals such as "Carta seminal," "Prensa continental" and others are published.

Concerning its political line, it is of note that the Cuban Popular Socialist Party does not officially participate in the Fidel Castro movement even if they support it in practice.

Political Prospects

The central objective that the party is pursuing is that of organizing itself and the support for the unified anti-imperialist front, whose job it will be to overthrow the Batista dictatorship and form a national and democratic government.

Actually, though the opposition to Batista is rising in every [political] party, there has not yet been an organization that will be the heart of the anti-imperialist front. The two attempts of the opposition parties to create a unified front without the communists (Miami Pact, Caracas Pact) were fruitless.

Even if a formal agreement between the opposition parties was still not reached, nevertheless in the localities, unit committees [Comitati unitary] were formed during the preparations for the political strike of 9 April (promoted by Fidel Castro and conducted prematurely) and afterward during the course of the fight in defense of the workers' pressing wage claims.

In conclusion, Comrade Lazaro Peña noted the great help that the Communist Party of Italy can give to the Cuban communists by denouncing in the media the terror of the Batista regime and the danger of American-led military aggression and he made a formal request that such help will be intensified.