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Date: 19 NOV 62

DIST: 1 - SIG
 1 - BOARD (S)
 1 - INDEVOUT/3/OPS
 ① - INDEVOUT/3/PROD
 1 - REPORT CHRON
 1 - AMB

DIR INFO ²⁰⁻¹⁰ BERN CITE ²⁰⁻¹¹ GNVA 4470INTEL PBRUMEN ³² INKSUPDATA: ZRWAAHOO. ⁶¹ INDEVOUT 3 SEE ²⁰⁻¹¹ GNVA 4469

FILED: 191945Z

REPORT CLASS SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM NO DISSEM ABROAD

(INSERT REPORT SYMBOL AND NUMBER) COUNTRY: USSR, CUBA

SUBJ: COMMENTARY CONCERNING THE PROBABLE REACTION OF FIDEL CASTRO AND HIS PRINCIPAL ASSOCIATES TO THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL OF OFFENSIVE MISSILES FROM CUBA AND TO U.S. DEMANDS RE THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET IL-28 AIRCRAFT AND ON-SPOT INSPECTION.

DOI: 14 NOVEMBER 1962

PADA: MEXICO CITY, 14 NOVEMBER 1962 APPR: 6

SOURCE: FORMER CUBAN OFFICIAL (C)

1. (FIELD COMMENT: THE AUTHOR OF THIS COMMENTARY OCCUPIED A RESPONSIBLE POSITION IN HAVANA DURING THE FIRST YEAR AFTER THE CASTRO REVOLUTION. HE APPROVED OF THE APPARENT AIMS OF THE REVOLUTION AT THAT TIME. ALTHOUGH NOT AN INTIMATE OF FIDEL CASTRO HE WAS ACQUAINTED WITH THE LATTER. HE KNEW A WIDE CIRCLE OF CASTRO ASSOCIATES ON AN INTIMATE BASIS AND WORKED CLOSELY WITH THEM IN THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT. THE AUTHOR IS A VERY INTELLIGENT AND WELL EDUCATED MAN, WHO POSSESSES AN EXHAUSTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CUBAN SCENE IN THE PAST THREE DECADES. SINCE ARRIVING IN MEXICO HE HAS MAINTAINED CLOSE CONTACT, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, WITH A VARIETY OF CUBAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND ON THE BASIS OF

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OUTGOING

Charge:

Classification **SECRET**

Control:

Date:

PAGE TWO

FORMER ASSOCIATION AND FRIENDSHIP HAS DISCUSSED WITH THEM MANY FACETS OF CURRENT CUBAN POLITICAL LIFE. HOWEVER, THE AUTHOR HAS NOT HAD ANY CONTACTS WITH SUCH PERSONS SINCE THE ONSET OF THE CURRENT CRISIS.)

2. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT FIDEL CASTRO WILL ACCEDE TO SOVIET WISHES RE SETTLEMENT OF THE CURRENT CUBAN SITUATION, DESPITE THE PRESSURE REPORTEDLY BEING EXERCISED ON HIM BY SOVIET DEPUTY PREMIER ANASTAS MIKOYAN. CASTRO'S VANITY IS IMMENSE AND NO MATTER HOW IT HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO HIM BY MIKOYAN OR OTHER SOVIET OFFICIALS, HE MUST BE FURIOUS AT THE FACT THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS "BACKED DOWN" BEFORE THE U.S. AND IS NOW NEGOTIATING WITH THE U.S. ON AN INDEPENDENT BASIS. CASTRO MUST CONSIDER HIMSELF AS BEING IN A DESPERATE SITUATION. HE CAN NOT TURN HIS ANGER OPENLY ON THE SOVIET UNION BECAUSE IT WAS HE AND HIS BROTHER RAUL WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR MOVING CUBA SO DEEPLY INTO THE "SOCIALIST CAMP" DESPITE AT LEAST THE INITIAL RESISTANCE BY SEVERAL OF HIS PRINCIPAL FOLLOWERS, FOR EXAMPLE, PRESIDENT OSVALD DORTICOS AND FOREIGN MINISTER RAUL ROA. THUS TO ATTACK THE USSR PUBLICLY WOULD BE TO ADMIT THAT HE HAD MADE A MAJOR ERROR WITH RESPECT TO THE CONDUCT OF RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. REALIZATION BY CASTRO THAT SUCH IS THE SITUATION MUST CONSIDERABLY INCREASE HIS SENSE OF FRUSTRATION AND HIS FEELING OF DESPERATION.

3. FIDEL CASTRO IS DOMINATED BY VANITY. HE HAS MEGALOMANIACAL TENDENCIES, AND HE POSSESSES A COMPULSION FOR REVENGE WHICH IS NOTORIOUS; ON OCCASION THE LATTER

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Classification

Control:

Date:

PAGE THREE

COMPULSION HAS CAUSED HIM TO REACH BACK AS FAR AS TWENTY YEARS TO REVENGE ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST HIM AT THAT TIME. CASTRO'S CHARACTER IS SUCH THAT RATHER THAN ACCEPTING A LOSS IN PRESTIGE AND STATUS HE WOULD BE WILLING TO DESTROY HIMSELF AND THE CUBAN PEOPLE. IN THE CURRENT SITUATION UNLESS HE CAN SEE SOME WAY TO ACHIEVE A SOLUTION OF THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE U.S. BLOCKADE, AERIAL SURVEILLANCE AND THE DEMANDS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE IL-28 BOMBERS AND FOR ON-SPOT INSPECTION IN CUBA, CASTRO IS FULLY CAPABLE OF UNDERTAKING AN ACT OF DESPERATION, FOR EXAMPLE THE AERIAL BOMBARDMENT OF THE U.S. OR SOME GROSS ACT AGAINST THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN CUBA.

4. THE MOOD AMONG LEADING FIDELISTAS MUST BE ONE OF SORROW, AND BITTERNESS AND RAGE AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH THEY WILL REGARD AS HAVING SOLD OUT CUBA. THE SOVIET TREATMENT OF CUBA AS A PAWN IN THE INTERNATIONAL GAME WILL BE PARTICULARLY GALLING TO THE CUBAN NATURE. RAUL CASTRO IS LIKELY TO FEEL PERSONAL INJURY, IF, AS SEEMS TO BE THE CASE, IT IS AS A RESULT OF HIS TRIP TO MOSCOW THAT SOME OF THE MISSILES WERE SENT TO CUBA. WHILE HIS REACTION IS LIKELY TO BE LESS ERRATIC THAN THAT OF FIDEL, RAUL IS POTENTIALLY CAPABLE OF ADOPTING AN EXTREMELY HARD LINE AGAINST THE SOVIETS. HIS REACTION WHEN HE FELT THAT THERE HAD BEEN BETRAYAL, EVEN BY COMMUNISTS TO WHOM HE WAS FORMERLY CLOSE, WAS SHOWN IN HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ANIBAL ESCALANTE, WHOM HE WISHED TO EXECUTE AFTER THE LATTER'S ANTI-FIDELISTA

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PAGE FOUR

Date:

ACTIVITY BECAME KNOWN.

5. AMONG OTHER INFLUENTIAL FIDELAISTAS, OSVALDO DORTICOS IS LIKELY TO BE PARTICULARLY INCENSED AT THE SOVIET ACTION. DESPITE FREQUENT PRESS REPORTS THAT HE IS A LONG TIME COMMUNIST, IT IS A FACT THAT DORTICOS OPPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AT THE TIME OF MIKOYAN'S FIRST TRIP TO CUBA. HE DID THIS APPARENTLY BECAUSE HE REGARDED IT AS A STEP WHICH WOULD UNNECESSARILY HARDEN U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARDS CUBA. IN ADDITION, HE IS KNOWN TO HAVE OPPOSED MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY RAMIRO VALDEZ AND THE G-2, AND BY ANIBAL ESCALANTE AND HIS HENCHMEN. THUS HE IS LIKELY TO BE PARTICULARLY ANGERED AND BETTER THAT THE POLICIES WHICH HE UNSUCCESSFULLY OPPOSED WERE IMPLEMENTED AND HAVE LED TO SUCH DISASTROUS RESULTS.

6. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT LEADING FIDELISTAS DIFFER FROM CASTRO RE THE ACTION CUBA SHOULD NOW TAKE, IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT THEY WILL ATTEMPT BY FORCE TO CAUSE HIM TO TAKE A CONTRARY COURSE OF ACTION, OR TO TRY TO STRIP HIM OF POWER. THEY ARE TOO THOROUGHLY AWARE OF HIS RUTHLESSNESS AND VINDICTIVENESS TO RISK SUCH ACTION EXCEPT IN EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES. IF, HOWEVER, HE EMBARKS ON AN ACT OF UTTER FOLLY WHICH IN THEIR VIEW INVITES THE DESTRUCTION OF CUBA, THEY MIGHT ACT AGAINST HIM.

7. THERE HAVE BEEN PRESS REPORTS OF A PROPOSED DEMILITARIZATION OF THE CARIBBEAN AREA. THIS SEEMS TO BE ONE FORMULA WHICH CONCEIVABLY MIGHT GIVE FIDEL CASTRO A WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE WHICH CONFRONTS HIM, SINCE HE MIGHT FEEL THAT HE COULD PERMIT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF

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PAGE FIVE

Date:

U. S. DEMANDS AND STILL SAVE FACE, FOR EXAMPLE, BY SAYING THAT HE HAS NOTHING AGAINST CUBA BEING THE FIRST OBJECT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF A GENERAL AGREEMENT SINCE TOMORROW IT WILL BE THE TURN OF THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE. CASTRO MIGHT ACCEPT SOME SUCH A GENERAL ARRANGEMENT AS A MEANS OF SAVING FACE EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE IN FACT AN APPLICATION OF THE SAME MEASURES RE THE CANAL ZONE AS RE CUBA.

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