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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

• ROUTINE

Intelligence Information Cable

COUNTRY CUBA

TDCS DB-315/01644-64

DATE OF INFO. NOVEMBER, EARLY DECEMBER 1964, AND AS STATED DISTR. 11 DECEMBER 1964

SUBJECT

COMMENTS ON RECENT MANEUVERING BY FIDEL CASTRO AND BACKGROUND ON THE GRDOQUI AFFAIR

PLACE & DATE ACQ. 10 DECEMBER 1964

REF IN -39463

SOURCE AND

FIELD REPORT NO.

APPRAISAL: A FORMER HIGH-LEVEL CUBAN OFFICIAL WHO WAS ONCE ACTIVE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT AND A CONFIDANT OF FIDEL CASTRO. HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN ANTI-COMMUNIST AND IS NOW STRONGLY ANTI-CASTRO. HE CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH MANY CUBAN OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT. SOURCE HAS PROVIDED A LIMITED NUMBER OF REPORTS WHICH APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN ACCURATE.

1. PROBABLY THE MAJOR CHANGE THAT HAS OCCURRED IN CUBA DURING THE PAST YEAR, TOGETHER WITH THE DECLINING ECONOMIC SITUATION, HAS BEEN THE CENTRALIZATION OF DECISION-MAKING POWERS IN ONE MAN, PREMIER FIDEL CASTRO RUZ. CASTRO REFUSES TO LISTEN TO ADVICE AND IS FOREVER BYPASSING HIS MINISTERS. CASTRO GETS AN IDEA AND WITHOUT CONSULTING ANYONE WILL CALL A TRUSTED OFFICER, ASSIGN HIM THE TASK, AND ORDER HIM TO REPORT DIRECTLY TO CASTRO. THIS CAUSES TOTAL CONFUSION IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, AND HAS ALSO GIVEN RISE TO PUBLIC CRITICISM OF CASTRO. SUCH CRITICISM, ALTHOUGH MOSTLY IN A JOKING VEIN, IS A NEW DEVELOPMENT. CASTRO IS AWARE THAT THE PEOPLE ARE BECOMING

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CRITICAL, AND HE IS STARTING TO MANEUVER TO REGAIN GROUND.

2. CASTRO'S INVESTIGATION OF JOAQUIN ORDOQUI MESA WAS THE AFTERMATH OF AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE MARCH 1964 TRIAL OF MARCOS ARMANDO RODRIGUEZ ALFONSO. ORDOQUI WAS VERY UNHAPPY WITH THE PROCEEDINGS AND HE REFUSED TO LET MATTERS REST. ORDOQUI CONTINUED TO EXPRESS IRRITATION ABOUT THE MANNER IN WHICH THE TRIAL HAD BEEN HANDLED, AND HIS CRITICAL ATTITUDE CONTRIBUTED TO CASTRO'S BRINGING MATTERS TO A HEAD.

3. CASTRO'S PRIMARY CONCERN REGARDING THE "OLD GUARD" COMMUNISTS IS THAT THEY ARE SO DISLIKED BY THE MASSES. BY KEEPING THEM, HOWEVER, CASTRO GIVES HIMSELF MANEUVERING GROUND. CASTRO REALIZES HE MUST ACT AGAINST THE "OLD GUARD" COMMUNISTS WITH RESTRAINT IN ORDER NOT TO CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH THE SOVIETS. THE LAST THING CASTRO WANTS IS AN UNCONTROLLED CRISIS EITHER WITH THE SOVIETS OR WITHIN THE RÉGIME.

4. CASTRO'S MAJOR PROBLEMS ARE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, AND LABOR. LAZARO PEÑA GONZALEZ, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL DE TRABAJADORES DE CUBA REVOLUCIONARIA (REVOLUTIONARY CUBAN WORKERS' ORGANIZATION, CTC-R) IS SLATED TO BE REMOVED, BUT ONLY CASTRO WILL SAY WHEN. CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ RODRIGUEZ, DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE LA REFORMA AGRARIA (NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRARIAN REFORM, INRA) HAS ALSO HAD HIS PROBLEMS WITH CASTRO. THE INRA IS A "MESS" BUT IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT ANYONE CAN SUCCEED IN THE JOB, AND IT IS UNLIKELY

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THAT CASTRO WILL ESCALATE THE CRISIS BY A MOVE AGAINST RODRIGUEZ AT THIS TIME. (SOURCE COMMENT: CASTRO ONCE SAID THAT HE WILL NOT PERMIT HIMSELF TO BE PRESSURED BY ANYONE AND WILL REPLACE OFFICIALS ONLY WHEN HE DESIRES TO DO SO. AS EARLY AS DECEMBER 1963 CASTRO WAS PLANNING TO REMOVE AUGUSTO MARTINEZ SANCHEZ AS MINISTER OF LABOR AT A CONVENIENT TIME, THUS HIS RECENT ACTION AGAINST MARTINEZ MAY REPRESENT THE REALIZATION OF A YEAR-OLD INTENTION.) CASTRO'S PROBLEMS WITH THE MILITARY HAVE BEEN LESS SERIOUS. ACTION TAKEN AGAINST MILITARY OFFICERS HAS BEEN ON DISCIPLINARY, NOT POLITICAL GROUNDS, AS IN THE CASE OF THE DISMISSAL OF CAPTAIN JOSE AGUSTIN "TINTIN" DIAZ-ARGÜELLES.

5. FIELD DISSEM: CINCLANT, CINCSO.

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