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ADVANCE TELETYPE DISSEMINATION (COMPLETE) OF 00-K-3,277,461. NORMAL DSSEMINATION WILL FOLLOW. THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION.

COUNTRY : CUBA

SUBJECT : ESTIMATE OF AGRICULTURAL DESTRUCTION DUE TO HURRICANE FLORA

DATE OF INFO : 9 OCT 63 AND EARLIER

PLACE ACQUIRED: ---

DATE ACQUIRED: 9 OCT 63 AND EARLIER

1963 OCT 10 19 50

RECEIVED

*Cuba*

*S*

PAGE 2 RUEPIA 31X C O N F I D E N T I A L

SOURCE: CUBAN NATIONAL, PRESENTLY LIVING IN THE U.S.

SOURCE HAS BEEN AN AGRICULTURAN ENGINEER FOR OVER 20 YEARS AND WAS EMPLOYED BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR OVER 15 YEARS. DURING THE BATISTA REGIME, AS WELL AS TWO YEARS UNDER THE CASTRO REGIME, HE WAS DEPUTY CHIEF OF PLANS AND PROGRAMS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. HE IS VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE AGRICULTURAL AREA IN ORIENTE, AND HAS PROVIDED EXCELLENT INFORMATION ON CUBAN AGRICULTURE NUMEROUS TIMES IN THE PAST. HE IS CONSIDERED AN AUTHORITY IN THIS FIELD.

(THIS REPORT WAS DEVELOPED BY AN AFNIN AIR FORCE REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNED TO THE OFFICE OF PREPARATION.)

1. BASED ON MY EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN THE CUBAN AGRICULTURAL FIELD, AND HAVING WITNESSED DAMAGE TO CUBAN AGRICULTURE BY PAST HURRICANES, I ESTIMATE THAT THE HURRICANE FLORA, PROBABLY DESTROYED CLOSE TO 50 PER CENT OF CUBA'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION FOR THIS YEAR, AND WILL HAVE A SERIOUS EFFECT ON NEXT YEAR'S PRODUCTION. THE AREA WHERE THE HURRICANE WAS STATIONARY FOR SEVERAL DAYS, IS THE PRINCIPAL GRAIN BELT IN CUBA.

2. ABOUT 50 TO 60 PER CENT OF CUBA'S RICE IS GROWN IN ORIENTE, IN THE AREA OF MANZANILLO. A CUBAN VARIETY OF RICE, KNOWN

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AS ZAYAS BAZAN (OR HONDURAS) IS PLANTED IN THIS AREA AND HAS A PECULIAR CHARACTERISTIC. THE STEM OF THIS RICE IS VERY WEAK, AND ALWAYS BENDS WHEN THE FULL HEAD IS FORMED, ABOUT A MONTH BEFORE HARVEST. THIS VARIETY OF RICE IS HARVESTED, STARTING ABOUT 15 NOVEMBER, SO I ASSUME THAT MOST OF IT IS NOW DOWN. BECAUSE OF THIS CHARACTERISTIC THE RICE HAD TO BE HARVESTED BY HAND, OR U.S. MACHINERY MODIFIED, SINCE THE RICE HEADS HAD TO BE PICKED FROM THE GROUND. IT WAS ALSO NECESSARY TO DRAIN THE WATER OFF THE RICE A MONTH TO SIX WEEKS BEFORE HARVEST, SO THAT THE HEADS WOULD NOT GERMINATE AND ROT IN THE WATER. DUE TO THE EXTREME FLOODING DURING THE RECENT HURRICANE AND THE FACT THAT THE RICE WAS ALMOST READY FOR HARVEST, I ESTIMATE THAT THE ENTIRE CROP WILL BE LOST.

3. MOST OF THE BEANS CONSUMED IN CUBA ARE GROWN IN THE HOLGUIN AREA. BEAN PLANTS CAN NOT STAND TOO MUCH FLOODING, OR EXCESSIVE WINDS. I AM REASONABLY SURE THAT MOST OF THE BEAN CROP WILL BE LOST.

4. HOLGUIN WAS ALSO THE CENTER FOR CORN EXPERIMENTATION. THE CORN DILLI SEED COMPANY ESTABLISHED A LARGE EXPERIMENTAL FARM NEAR HOLGUIN, PRIOR TO THE CASTRO REGIME, WHICH WAS TAKEN OVER

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AND CONTINUED TO BE OPERATED BY THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT. ONE THOUSAND ACRES OF LAND WERE USED TO RAISE HYBRID SEED CORN FOR THE ENTIRE ISLAND. THE CORN IS ALMOST MATURE AT THIS TIME OF YEAR. THE HURRICANE, WHICH REMAINED IN THAT AREA FOR ALMOST FOUR DAYS, PROBABLY DESTROYED THE ENTIRE CORN CROP, AND OF MORE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE, THE SEED CROP FOR NEXT YEAR. END OF REPORT.

GP-1.

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