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FROM: Habana
TO: Secretary of State
NO: 1043, November 6, 4 p.m.

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Reply to presentation made to President Dorticos on October 27 currently under study by GOC will when received give basis for careful re-examination US policy toward Cuba. Meanwhile following personal reactions to course of events since mid-October may be of interest.

1. Although the Castro magic still sways mobs and his political strength remains great, he has lost much "quality" support even in ranks own party and in government where enthusiasm of several important figures replaced by precarious fear-induced conformity. Doubts of his capacity as ruler becoming more insistent.

2. My previous view of Castro as highly emotional individual yet generally rational and often cold-bloodedly and cynically playing the demagogue replaced by opinion that evident cynicism goes hand in hand with definite mental unbalance at times. His performance of October 26 was not that of sane man.

3. Our efforts, direct and indirect, both here and in Washington to remove Castro's deep-seated hostility to USA and suspicion of our motives and actions have been unsuccessful. Malevolence and cynicism characterizing handling of so-called "bombing" incident of October 21 was revelation of tremendous perhaps insuperable obstacles in way of establishing relations of good faith and mutual respect with present leaders of GOC.

4. Contrary to our earlier hopes, moderating forces (National Bank group especially) have for present at least lost out in contest for influence over Castro. Our bitter enemies, Raul Castro and Che Guevara are very much in the saddle. They can be counted

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be counted on to speed up radical agrarian reform as well as measures designed to destroy or cripple US mining, petroleum and public utility interests.

5. As indicated above, there has been marked increase here in questioning of sanity and competence of Castro and of soundness of measures advocated by GOC and particularly by his principal followers. It is highly important, as long as our over-riding security interests permit, that this trend be not arrested by actions or attitudes of ours. I believe it can be counted on to grow as further developments occur which bring out characteristics of Castro and his principal aides as well as unsoundness of their measures in terms of achievement of their stated objectives. We must, of course, defend our legitimate interests and those of our citizens in all ways open to us without appearing to coerce Cuba's sovereignty or interposing punitive action or threats which will appear to involve such coercion or unnecessarily arousing easily exacerbated Cuban nationalism.

6. Restraint and patience must continue to characterize our policy. This regime--and I believe there is no doubt as to its nonviability due to its own excesses and deficiencies within a relatively short period (months rather than years)--must not be given "shot in the arm" of positive actions or threats by us (even assuming such actions were open to us). Our presentation of October 27 was right in tone and timing. We must, to extent possible, combat attempt to picture USC in general and Department of State in particular as having no policy other than defense of status quo (including that of all US corporations) in Cuba and we must continue to demonstrate sympathy for aims and aspirations of Cuban people and realization that many things can and should be changed here.

7. We have recognized and must continue to recognize that accusations of communism play into hands of Communists and extremists here and help them to control and influence Castro. US press handling of this issue unhelpful. There is no real awareness here of the issues of the East-West struggle even on part of Minister of State. Anti-communism considered merely a weapon of "US reactionaries" forged in time of McCarthy hysteria. At same time we should also recognize situation not working out entirely to communist satisfaction and that to some extent Washington and Moscow viewed with same bias in eyes of Castro and many of his followers. Although Fidel and Raul Castro and Guevara are

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Guevara are playing game highly unpalatable to us and satisfying to Moscow to that extent, their indignant protest at being "smeared" as Communists are symptomatic of underlying realities here. The essentially individualistic "bourgeois" nature of aspirations cherished by most Cubans above the very lowest level is a factor of great importance and will, I am confident, exert increasing influence.

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