

INCOMING TELEGRAM

## Department of State

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Action

ARA

FROM: Habana

Info

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 1124, November 16, 4 p.m.

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## LIMIT DISTRIBUTION.

Castro and his more extreme followers are pursuing familiar tactic of creating popular belief that heroic, all-deserving Cuban people are surrounded by powerful unscrupulous enemies principally foreign (American) and that unquestioning obedience to revolutionary leaders only way out. Amongst raw men and bogies created sustain this thesis Department will recall "bombings" with collision of US authorities, corruption by "interests" of US news media in their treatment of revolution here, threat of punitive cut in sugar quota, our alleged collusion with Cuban "war criminals", the "anti-Communist" theme, et cetera. To the extent that these essays in Goebbels-type propaganda are successful, and atmosphere is created here helpful to the commission of excesses and the adoption of extreme measures includings some we might find provocative. It is to our interest to dispel this atmosphere to extent possible.

Here are three suggestions for Department's consideration:

1. A Department statement in answer to press question effect American Embassy in Habana reports no increase in normal very low level of incidents involving misunderstandings or difficulties between Cubans and Americans and that in fact many Americans in Habana have reported increased cordiality from all classes of the Cuban people as result recent developments. Attempts to arouse anti-American feelings have been generally repudiated. Idea here would be to say something which might also stimulate tourist trade and counter unfavorable developments in that trade which has been and can be stabilizing factor our relations.

2. A public statement, which might be official, along lines contained in our November 9 note to Dihigo, re "war criminals", their legal status in US and failure of GOC to do anything

whatever

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whatever to prove their "war criminal" status thru extradition procedures in such way that US judicial process could operate.

Such a statement, however, would have little or no helpful effect on public opinion here and might even be counter productive, unless it could be accompanied by positive indications of US intention to restrict conspiratorial activities of the more notorious elements, principally Massferrer, Ventura and Laurent (who it (#) out of the US altogether.

3. A statement of the administrations position on sugar legislation with a denial of any intent to propose to congress that quotas be used in the case of Cuba or any other producing area as a means of influencing domestic policies in those areas. General principles on which sugar program is based could be restated. Changes which have taken place 19 (#) discharge. A generally phrased recognition of Cuba's important role in achievement this policy and mutual benefits which have flowed therefrom would be in order here.

I believe statements along general lines above suggested will help prick some of Castro's balloons and may strengthen hands of more moderate elements here. This "besieged citadel" mentality can be very dangerous even if wholly unjustified.

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(#) Omissions. Corrections to follow.

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Such a statement, however, would have little or no helpful effect on public opinion here and might even be counter productive, unless it could be accompanied by positive indications of US intention to restrict conspiratorial activities of the more notorious elements, principally Massferrer, Ventura and Laurent (who it is understood all entered US illegally), such as by causing them to move out of Florida at least and preferably out of the US altogether.

3. A statement of the administrations position on sugar legislation with a denial of any intent to propose to congress that quotas be used in the case of Cuba or any other producing area as a means of influencing domestic policies in those areas. General principles on which sugar program is based could be restated. Changes which have taken place since 1934 have reflected economic and commercial policy as determined by Congress and US executive. Policy directed at assuring adequate supplies at reasonable prices to US consumers with due regard interests producers. That is responsibility USG will continue discharge. A generally phrased recognition of Cuba's important role in achievement this policy and mutual benefits which have flowed therefrom would be in order here.

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