

Telephone Interview With Tomas Regalado
of WRHC Radio in Miami, FL.
August 24, 1985

Q. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Good morning, Tomas, it's great to hear your voice again.

Q. Sir, first of all, how do you feel?

¹ *Special Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Media Relations.*

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The President. I feel just fine. I really do. As a matter of fact, as soon as you and I are finished here, I'm going over and saddle up a horse and take a ride.

Q. Well, Mr. President, we're very glad. Sir, 2 years ago in the White House, I asked you about the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement, and you said that as far as you're concerned, that agreement has been abrogated many times by the Russians and Cuba. My question, sir, is are you prepared to denounce that agreement publicly and officially?

The President. Now, are we talking about the agreement of—did I understand—of the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement after the missile crisis in Cuba?

Q. Yes, sir.

The President. Ah. Well, actually, that was an agreement, an informal agreement; it had no legal standing. And it is true that the Soviet Union have observed the most important part, which was not replacing the nuclear missiles in Cuba or having any there. They have observed that.

Almost from the beginning, however, there are other facets of that kind of informal agreement that have been violated: the use of Castro's forces throughout the world, such as in Angola and all; his interference in Central America and Latin America in attempts to get overthrows of legitimate, democratic governments and all. So, I don't see where there's any need to take action with regard to that particular agreement, but simply to deal with each issue as it comes up and what they are doing and what they're not doing. And what they're doing with regard to stirring up revolution in Central America is wrong for all the Americas, and I think all of us should oppose it.

Q. Mr. President, as you have said, Castro has been waging war on the U.S. for 26 years, exporting terrorism and suppression in this hemisphere and now trafficking with drugs. Isn't it self-defense to take measures to counter those attacks by Castro?

The President. Yes. And I think we are in dealing with it where he is attacking, such as in—right now in Nicaragua. We did it before that in El Salvador. When we first came into this administration, the whole question was whether Salvador was going to go Communist. Well, now, we have a de-

mocracy there. There have been several elections, supervised elections in which we know that they were free of any corruption. Democracy is on the march in other areas, and right now the sore spot is Nicaragua. And we're going to continue our help and support of the freedom fighters.

Q. Mr. President, by the way, speaking to the OAS in 1982, you said that freedom cannot survive if our neighbors lived in misery and oppression. Can you tell us if the Cubans can expect some kind of help from the United States to seek freedom for Cuba?

The President. We have—on more than one occasion—we have heard some proposals from the present Cuban Government about wanting a better relationship and wanting to discuss with us how that could come about. We've responded, and then we've found that, really, they had no concrete proposal. They were offering nothing.

I do not believe that armed overthrow is the answer, but I believe that we should continue some of the restraints and restrictions that we have with regard to our relations with Cuba. But at the same time make it evident that any time that they want to prove by deed, not just word, that they are willing and want to come back to the community of American nations, as they once were, we'd be very happy to help and to help open the door for that. But at the present time, they are openly a satellite of the Soviet Union and taking their orders from the Soviet Union, and we see no opening for us to be of help.

Q. Mr. President, do you think that when you finish your second term, among your legacy to history will be a Central America and a Caribbean free of communism entirely?

The President. I don't know whether we can accomplish that "entirely"—to qualify that word—but I think that the progress that is being made in Latin America with regard to democracy is far more outstanding than many of us have realized over these past couple of years.

Right now about 50 percent of the people in Latin America live in democracies or in countries that are rapidly moving toward democracy. That has never been true before, and we're going to continue helping

in every way we can to keep that trend going. But I think great progress has been made.

Q. Mr. President, one final question. Would you be discussing the situation on the activities of Cuba and Nicaragua with Mr. Gorbachev in Vienna?

The President. I would think that that subject could very well come up, because, as I view these talks with Mr. Gorbachev and our effort to try and lessen the hostility and see if we can't eliminate some of the suspicion that exists between the two countries there, I think very much that we would point out to him the contrast between our own conduct and what he is doing with regard to the Americas—or what his country is doing with regard to the Americas—by way of Cuba principally, and get that out on the table as one of the facets of the relationship that we think stands in the way of any better relationship with the Soviet Union.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. Well, thank you. Been a pleasure.

Note: The interview was conducted at 9:31 a.m. from the Miami studios of WRHC Radio. The President was at Rancho del Cielo, his ranch near Santa Barbara, CA.

As printed above, this item follows the text of the interview which was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 26.