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CASTRO INTERVIEW ON RELATIONS WITH U.S.

[] 3 Jan 64
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[3-part message complete]

I am communicating to you herewith Washington
telegram [] of 2 January 1964.

On 1 January Mr. FIDEL CASTRO granted an interview by telephone to a newsman from the ABC radio and television network. The Cuban leader repeated that he hoped to normalize relations between his country and the United States, and he added: "Henceforth it is up to the United States to take a step in that direction." Mr. CASTRO stated that "until the tragic death of President KENNEDY," he thought that "the normalization of Cuban relations with the American administration was possible." While acknowledging that public opinion in the United States is still hostile to Cuba and wants the naval blockade of the island strengthened, he appeared "full of hope" as to the future of his relations with President JOHNSON.

44USC2107(5)(g)(2)(D)
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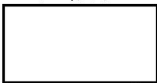
The Cuban Chief of Government even gave concrete proof of his good will by bringing up the problem of the indemnification of American citizens who were victims of nationalization in the following terms: "We are ready to speak of the indemnities due under the heading of the nationalization of American property by the revolutionary((A)). Thus, you can see that we are sincere when we say that we are ready to talk, but that does not depend only on us."

However, Mr. CASTRO did refuse to pay the price of

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THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS 2 PAGE(S)

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3/0, T70-64

renunciation of Marxism for the "amelioration of his relations with the United States." The administration has not, up to now, commented on this interview, which is receiving little publicity in the American press.

((A)) Obvious omission.

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