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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

16 November 1979

MEMORANDUM

CUBAN AND SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA

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Indroduction

[Large Redacted Block]

Approved For Release 2005/02/22 : NLC-23-53-7-4-7

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[Redacted] the Office of Political Analysis. It was requested by the National Security Adviser to the President. Information in this memorandum includes all reports received through 15 November. This memorandum was coordinated with the Clandestine Services, the Office of Economic Research, and the National Intelligence Officer for Latin America [Redacted]

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delegation to Belize for a conference of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. Shoman and other leftists evidently met with some of the Cubans privately, but the opposition headlined the discussion, thereby further sensitizing the Price government. [redacted]

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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Cuba

MB:

This is an excellent review of Soviet and Cuban activities in the Caribbean and in Central America. Its basic premises are:

- That the Soviet Union has maintained a low profile in the region, allowing Cuba to take the lead for both pragmatic political reasons and economic considerations. The Soviet Union has no desire to subsidize another Cuba or to poach excessively in an area it still recognizes as within the US sphere of influence.

- That Cuba has been successful largely because it has abandoned the ideological baggage which limited its influence in the past. It has allowed the new generation of radicals to take the lead in the area and, when some measure of success has been demonstrated, Castro has followed with support. Since regional radicals have no alternative except Cuba, Castro's policy has been successful in spreading Cuban influence.

In the typical CIA fashion, the paper allows that Cuban/Soviet successes are not irreversible and that the future may hold as many losses as gains.

CS