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Latin America Report

(FOUO 1/82)

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26 January 1982

LATIN AMERICA REPORT

(FOUO 1/82)

CONTENTS

COUNTRY SECTION

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Briefs

'PRELA', 'GNA' Sign Agreement 1

BAHAMAS

Disarray in Opposition Likely To Give Pinning Victory
(LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN, 4 Dec 81) 2

CUBA

ACC's Bustamante Discusses Cooperation With USSR
(Jose Angel Bustamante; AMERICA LATINA, Oct 81) 4

EL SALVADOR

Socialist International Supports FMLN on Elections
(PRELA, 25 Dec 81) 7

GUATEMALA

ORPA Reports 98 Army Casualties From 30 Sep to 5 Nov
(PRELA, 10 Dec 81) 8

GUYANA

Declining Economy Factor in Government Personnel Changes
(LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN, 4 Dec 81)..... 9

Briefs

Human Rights Violations 11

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| | | |
|-------------|---|----|
| HONDURAS | | |
| | MPL Says Honduras To Be Staging Area for Aggression (PRELA, 9 Jan 82) | 12 |
| NICARAGUA | | |
| | D'Escoto Demands End to U.S. 'Verbal Terrorism' (John Rettie; THE GUARDIAN, 18 Dec 81) | 14 |
| PANAMA | | |
| | Briefs Center of Sugarcane Technology | 16 |
| ST. VINCENT | | |
| | Briefs Island Development Dispute | 17 |
| VENEZUELA | | |
| | Briefs Communists Congratulate Cuban Assembly Leaders | 18 |

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COUNTRY SECTION

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

'PRELA', 'GNA' SIGN AGREEMENT--Georgetown, 13 Dec (PL)--The Latin American News Agency PRENSA LATINA and the Guyanese News Agency GNA signed here an agreement on collaboration and exchange of information between both news agencies. The document was signed by Courtney Gibson, chief director of the GNA and by Gustavo Robreno, managing director of PRENSA LATINA, in a ceremony held in the premises of the recently created Guyanese agency. The agreement stipulates the development and broadening of cooperation between GNA and PRENSA LATINA, both in the bilateral field and within the framework of the nonaligned movement news agencies pool. During his stay in Guyana, the PL managing director met with Ivon Harewood-Benn, minister in charge of the information sector, and Frank Campbell, chief editor of the daily GUYANA CHRONICLE and paid visits to different mass media. [Text] [PA130425 Havana PRELA in English 1933 GMT 12 Dec 81]

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COUNTRY SECTION

BAHAMAS

DISARRAY IN OPPOSITION LIKELY TO GIVE PINDLING VICTORY

London LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN in English 4 Dec 81 pp 9, 10

[Text] The Bahamas is gearing for an election next year that even the government's worst critics admit the ruling Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) will have a hard time losing. The problem is the two major opposition parties whose mutual dislike has so far superseded their joint concern over the prospect of another five years of 'stop and go' government by the PLP.

Politically the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Free National Movement (FNM) represent a mix of disenchanted PLPers and vestiges of the white minority United Bahamian Party (UBP) which governed prior to 1967. Once united under the banner of the FNM, the opposition was badly mauled in the 1972 general election and split just six months short of the 1977 election. Many supporters are convinced that action cost them a substantial number of seats if not the government.

Philosophically the two parties are indistinguishable. Both are committed to less rather than more government. They blame the administration's expanding involvement in the private sector plus a succession of bad policy decisions for the country's rising debt and bouts of deep recession since 1970. Nevertheless sporadic attempts at reunification have floundered because neither the leadership of the FNM, controlled mainly by former PLPers, nor that of the SDP, led by former UBPers, have been able to bridge their old party differences.

The opposition emerged from the 1977 election with eight of 38 parliamentary seats. Since then there has been one defection to the PLP, while the remainder have sub-divided and re-grouped into the present arrangement. Personal rivalries between and within the various factions have in the past four years provoked a stream of recriminations totally divorced from the main issues.

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Recently the balance has shifted to the FNM following the departure of several leading SDP members. The SDP was further weakened last month when one of its four parliamentary members announced he would seek re-election as an FNM candidate. The SDP has now said it will contest only five seats, leaving the field clear for the FNM. The FNM insists, however, that it intends to run candidates for the three SDP seats, even at the risk of losing them all to the PLP.

At a time of growing dissatisfaction with the government's 14-year record, such dissension within the opposition has left many voters in a political no man's land. Addressing the PLP convention in October, prime minister Lynden Pindling admitted that the country is suffering from a general breakdown in discipline for which he was partly responsible. He did not realise, he said, that by encouraging Bahamians to better themselves, they would choose unemployment over manual labour.

Police statistics show that major crime has doubled in ten years. In many cases those responsible are neither poor nor unemployed, Pindling said. Both crime and unemployment are expected to worsen as the deepening US recession makes itself felt on the Bahamian economy. The tourist industry, in the doldrums for the past year, is predicted to show a US\$50m shortfall for 1981. The government has reacted by increasing public spending to provide more jobs and social service benefits.

Although not obliged to call an election before mid-1982, the prime minister is likely to do so early in the year before the economic situation worsens. The absence of an effective opposition could mean a clear and overwhelming victory for the PLP. It could also open the door to the much smaller but more disciplined Vanguard Socialist Party.

Highly critical of the PLP, the ten-year-old Vanguard still has no parliamentary representation because of a general antipathy by Bahamians to socialist philosophy. Its main support has come from young people at the lower end of the economic scale.

Last month it announced that it would field 20 candidates in the election. Four years ago it put up four and won a total of 55 votes. Even if it fails to win any seats this time, the degree of support given the party could have far-reaching implications. □

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3
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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

ACC'S BUSTAMANTE DISCUSSES COOPERATION WITH USSR

Moscow AMERICA LATINA in Spanish Oct 81 pp 89-93

[Excerpt from speech by Jose Angel Bustamante on Soviet-Cuban scientific cooperation at USSR Academy of Sciences Latin America Institute on 25 December 1980]

[Text] On 27 April 1981 a solemn session of the Scientific Council and of the collective of the Latin America Institute (IAL) of the USSR Academy of Sciences was held to award the degree of doctor honoris causa of the IAL to the well-known Cuban scientific and public figure, Jose Angel Bustamante O'Leary. At this session Professor V. Vol'skiy, director of the IAL, pointed out the great significance and deep symbolism of this event, since the homage to the Cuban scientist was accorded on an important date for the institute, which celebrated its 20th anniversary the same day. The institute was created under the direct inspiration of the Cuban Revolution, in which one of the active participants was the present vice president of the Cuban Academy of Sciences, J.A. Bustamante.

Recently, J.A. Bustamante was 70 years old. In recognition of his services to science and for his great contribution to the development of Soviet-Cuban scientific exchanges, the Scientific Council of the IAL decided on 25 December 1980 to confer on him the title of doctor honoris causa of the institute.

In the name of all Soviet scientists and in particular of those who work in the institute, the chief of the Cuban Section of the IAL, Anatoliy Bekarevich, cordially congratulated J.A. Bustamante on this occasion.

The charge d'affaires of the Republic of Cuba in the USSR, Julio A. Puerta Quiroga, emphasized that the life of J.A. Bustamante is a brilliant example of devoted, revolutionary service to the people.

We publish below an extract of the address given by Dr J.A. Bustamante.

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It is a source of great satisfaction for me to receive today the degree of doctor honoris causa in sciences, since it is an honor whose value we can recognize.

Perhaps this award is justified in part by my deep interest in the history of medicine and science in general, which has led me to concentrate on its study in a way parallel to my real, professional interest: psychiatry.

However, without a doubt the affection of my Soviet colleagues and above all their consideration for my fatherland, Cuba, has influenced it in a more definite way. Cuba is the Island of Liberty, and in its name I think I am in a position to receive the award, as vice president for social sciences in our Academy of Sciences.

In the course of this activity it was possible for us to confirm in practice the fraternal and internationalist character of the relations between the USSR and our fatherland.

If we find in this way a partial explanation for the honor, when we add the relations which our activity has involved with the social sciences branch, we are led to the conclusion that it is in the name of our own academy and of Cuba that we decided to accept such an honor.

However, returning to our relationships, in the framework of which the granting of the degree is taking place, the following circumstances surround it--the great, internationalist attitude of our Soviet brothers, since, as Fidel once said very well: without the October Revolution the Cuban Revolution would not have been possible. Therefore, the Cuban Academy of Sciences could not have received the support of the USSR Academy of Sciences, so useful to the full achievement of its aspirations.

However, we want to emphasize that in response to the help so offered we must add that Cuba, for its part, knew enough to choose the proper path to leave its state of dependence and underdevelopment.

In the framework of scientific cooperation the role of the USSR Academy of Sciences and its help for the scientific development of Cuba, through the Cuban Academy of Sciences, is a manifest fact which we all recognize. The agreements reached between the two academies of sciences have promoted a close relationship between the member institutes of the two academies.

The Latin America Institute has played an important role in the development of these relationships, as much with the Latin American countries as with Cuba in a special way. We would like to take this opportunity to point out that the 20th anniversary of the foundation of this institute is being celebrated this month. The IAL has maintained praiseworthy relationships with our institutes of the Social Sciences Section of the Cuban Academy of Sciences, offering great help in obtaining degrees for a number of workers and scientists of the academy, maintaining an exchange of scientific cadres and especially in the development of research on the Isle of Youth in which the Latin American Institute, other institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and other Soviet organizations have participated. This research will make it possible to provide appropriate recommendations for the development of the Isle of Youth, but at the same time it will provide economic and mathematical models to study other territories in Cuba.

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The work carried out jointly, such as "Las relaciones ruso-cubanas y sovietico-cubanas en los siglos XVIII-XX" [Russian-Cuban and Soviet-Cuban Relations in the 18th-20th Centuries] (Moscow, Nauka, 1980), and also the basic work, "Importancia del Gran Octubre en la Revolucion Cubana" [The Importance of the Great October Revolution for the Cuban Revolution] (Moscow, Nauka, 1977), have provided new elements for the scientific explanation of the influence and importance of the October Revolution for the Cuban Revolution, as well as better understanding of Cuban-USSR relations.

Also of great value is the analysis of the national liberation movements in Latin America, in which the institute has shown a marked interest, helping us to understand the Latin American scene, as well as establishing practical conditions for the process to unfold. The monthly magazine published by the institute reaches many countries in Latin America; we also receive and use it.

The Social Sciences Section of the Cuban Academy of Sciences has received fraternal cooperation from the corresponding Social Sciences Section of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Comrade Fedoseyev, vice president of the USSR Section, together with the directors of the different institutes in that branch, have offered the fullest cooperation to our institutes. Based on the agreements that have been reached, that has permitted going into the problems which have been raised.

For obvious reasons our section was the most affected by the ideological struggle which developed in our midst, as a natural consequence of the profound revolution in which we have led the way. For this reason there was a consequent loss of ground in its development. Therefore, we needed to make a more pronounced effort to place ourselves on the appropriate level and which is essential for a socialist country.

This cooperation has made it possible to guarantee the help necessary for the development of the research plan in the social sciences, which covers seven fundamental problems and nine state problems, with their corresponding complex of themes which constitute our thematic plan and which have served to develop the disciplines and the training of the necessary cadres.

We must add that, if it is true that Cuba has received and continues to receive fraternal and internationalist help, which has been of such assistance in the development of its revolution as well as in the progress of science and technical services in our country, for its part Cuba has known how and will continue to know how to perform its consequent internationalist duty. For that purpose it has given economic, cultural, and scientific help, within the framework of its possibilities, to countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, whose revolutionary processes developed after that of Cuba.

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COUNTRY SECTION

EL SALVADOR

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL SUPPORTS FMLN ON ELECTIONS

PA252331 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2105 GMT 25 Dec 81

[Text] Mexico City, 25 Dec (PL)--The Socialist International will not give any validity to the elections that the Salvadoran regime is planning, if the conditions submitted by the FMLN are not taken into consideration.

Anselmo Sule, vice president of the Socialist International Commission for Latin America, said that the government that results from those elections will not be recognized by most democratic countries in the world.

This election, he said in an interview by SALPRESS NEWS AGENCY in this capital, are not the solution to the problem and on the contrary they could make the situation worse and increase repression against the people.

Sule, a leader of the Radical Party of Chile and vice president of the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties, COPPRAL, said on behalf of the Socialist International, that this organization fully supports the French-Mexican declaration which recognized the representativeness of the revolutionary forces and urges a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Sule said that the U.S. opinion that the recognition of the Salvadoran rebel forces by Mexico and France is an act of intervention "is a stupid argument which only serves to strengthen the repressive forces of the Salvadoran regime."

Sule added that the Socialist International has not made a categorical statement regarding U.S. interventionism in El Salvador, but he said in his opinion if the U.S. Government continues intervening in favor of the Christian Democratic Military Junta, the massacre of the Salvadoran people will continue.

Referring to U.S. threats of aggression of all sorts against Cuba and Nicaragua, Sule reiterated the Socialist International's commitment to the principle of non-intervention and self-determination of peoples.

The Socialist International has said, he added, that a military intervention would violate those principles, seriously affecting Latin America's stability and world peace also. That is why we have denounced it, Sule concluded.

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7
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COUNTRY SECTION

GUATEMALA

ORPA REPORTS 98 ARMY CASUALTIES FROM 30 SEP TO 5 NOV

PA102335 Havana PRELA in English 2025 GMT 10 Dec 81

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (PL)--The Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA) inflicted 98 casualties upon the Guatemalan regime army in actions conducted between 30 September and 5 November.

An ORPA communique released here states that the most important action took place on 5 November when it ambushed two regime units on La Marina Bridge in the village of Chayen, San Rafael Pie de la Cuesta. In the attack, in which the insurgents used automatic rifles, grenade launchers and land mines, 48 regime soldiers were killed and 16 others wounded.

On 30 September ORPA fighters ambushed an army truck on the road from Ostuncalco to Palestina de Los Altos in Quezaltenango Department. Twelve regime soldiers were killed and 9 more wounded most of them due to the explosion of a home made mine.

ORPA charged that the survivors of the regime contingent assassinated four unarmed farm people including a child.

An hour long battle took place on 4 October in the coffee groves of an estate called Patio de Bolas in the department of Suchitepequez, with a toll of eight dead and five wounded for the regime forces.

The previous day guerrillas and government forces fought for close to an hour near the village of Pala, in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan, Solola Department, with the presence of ambulances believed to indicate regime casualties.

ORPA described as a publicity maneuver the reports spread by the regime of General Romeo Lucas Garcia on purported desertion by farmers belonging to the guerrillas. It charged that the army forcibly carries off peasant young people, women, children and old people, interns them in camps near their own most attacked bases to take refuge behind them and thus stave off further attacks by the revolutionary forces.

ORPA points out that this method is a copy of the notorious strategic hamlets created by the U.S. forces in Vietnam.

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COUNTRY SECTION

GUYANA

DECLINING ECONOMY FACTOR IN GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL CHANGES

London LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN in English 4 Dec 81 p 7

[Text]

In a government reshuffle announced this week, information minister Frank Campbell was named editor-in-chief of National Newspapers; his ministry was taken over by prime minister Ptolemy Reid. Fitz Carmichael (forestry) and Joshua Chowritmootoo (environment and water supply) were dismissed and their ministries absorbed into others. The reshuffle followed the resignation of the minister for mechanical equipment, Kit Nascimento, to live abroad. According to an official statement, Nascimento is seeking an international appointment, backed by President Forbes Burnham; for the time being, he will retain honorary ministerial rank.

While Nascimento is taking the Ramphal road out of the country, a prominent government official, Ossie Baptiste, has joined the list of those leaving under less favourable circumstances. Baptiste, who was vice-president of the Guyana State Corporation (Guystac), the holding company for state enterprises, was reported to have resigned while out of the country in September; however, a notice in the *Official Gazette* stated last month that he had been dismissed as from 21 September. He is to take up an appointment with the Barbados-based Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce, the executive director of which, Pat Thompson, formerly headed Guyana's Bauxite Industry Development Corporation.

The continued drain of top figures from the state sector matches the relentless decline of the economy. The rumour is prevalent in Georgetown that the government's inability to meet IMF targets will mean that the Fund will not release the next tranche of funds under the 1980 facility — augmented as recently as July (RC-81-06). The consequence, according to the reports, could be a 15 per cent devaluation this month, only six months after the June devaluation which preceded the new IMF agreement.

With bauxite, rice and sugar production again running badly below target (RC-81-09), labour unrest has re-emerged. Work stoppages on several sugar estates have been blamed for production shortfalls, and bauxite workers last month staged a two-day walk-out to force payment of back pay due to them. The Canadian-owned Green Construction Company, originally contracted to carry out surface stripping, is now reported to be engaged on mining, in a move to supplement output from the inefficient state operations.

While the government has still not honoured its 1979 undertaking to pay a minimum wage of G\$14 a day (G\$3 = US\$1), increases of more than 100 per cent, backdated to 1 January, have been announced for the attorney-general, chief justice, members of the judiciary and top civil servants. The

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attorney-general's annual salary goes up from G\$24,000 to G\$56,000 (a 133 per cent increase), plus a duty allowance of G\$9,000, an entertainment allowance of G\$6,000, and a free furnished residence or G\$7,200 housing allowance.

On the legal front, however, the government received a setback at the end of October when judge Prem Persaud ruled that Commissioner of Police Lloyd Barker had acted unconstitutionally in preventing the two acquitted defendants in the recent arson trial, Drs Omawale and Rupert Roopnaraine, from leaving the country. He ordered Barker to remove the travel restriction forthwith.

Following the decision, Roopnaraine, an executive committee member of the opposition Working People's Alliance, visited London for talks with representatives of the British Labour Party and the Socialist International. It was announced that the WPA had applied to join the SI, and that it was establishing an external bureau in London to coordinate the party's overseas

activities. The bureau was expected to start functioning in the New Year, Roopnaraine said.

A group of Guyanese, Caribbean and British citizens has meanwhile announced the formation of a London-based Rodney Campaign Committee, to press for the appointment of an independent international commission of inquiry into the bomb death of WPA leader Walter Rodney on 13 June 1980; the committee is also calling for the suspension of legal proceedings against Rodney's brother Donald, who was injured in the explosion. Magistrate Norma Jackman, who was in charge of the Donald Rodney hearings and who has been noted for judgements favouring the government in political cases, has been transferred to the petty debt court. The transfer follows the recent criticism by Chancellor Victor Crane of some magistrates and judges for failing to maintain legal and moral standards (RC-81-09), in which he said they 'do not give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay . . . preferring to spend the time in liquor restaurants.' □

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COUNTRY SECTION

GUYANA

BRIEFS

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS--An alarming record of human rights abuses in Guyana has been assembled in a 72-page report, covering the 18 months from January 1980 to June 1981, recently published by the Guyana Human Rights Association. Introduced by an outline of recent political and economic developments, the report lists the violations under the headings of articles of the international human rights agreements signed by the Guyana government. The violations recorded include political murders; frequent use of firearms by police (resulting in the death of 22 people in the period under review); an increasing incidence of police brutality; political intervention in the legal process; arbitrary restrictions on the freedom of travel, press and assembly; dismissals and transfers of state employees as a form of political coercion; and others including shortcomings in social fields like health and education. The report contains 16 detailed accounts alleging police brutality. It is obtainable from Guyana Human Rights Association, P.O. Box 528, Lot 1, Brickdam, Georgetown, Guyana. [Text] [London LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN in English 4 Dec 81 p 7] COPYRIGHT: LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS, 1981

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COUNTRY SECTION

HONDURAS

MPL SAYS HONDURAS TO BE STAGING AREA FOR AGGRESSION

PA100220 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2215 GMT 9 Jan 82

[Text] San Jose, 9 Jan (PL)--The Honduran Cinchonero People's Liberation Movement [MPL] has charged that this country is preparing to receive thousands of officers and men of the Argentine, Chilean and Venezuelan armies.

A communique which this group released in Tegucigalpa today states that the first detachments of these armies will be arriving in late February and early March, with the complicity of the Honduran armed forces.

The MPL considers that the military movement is part of a broad intervention action which will be launched from Honduras against the liberation processes in El Salvador and Guatemala.

The organization cautioned that, in order to try to legalize the action, some governments guided by the Ronald Reagan Administration will invoke the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty [TIAR].

The group also asserts that in order to complement the aggression, new and false accusations against Cuba and Nicaragua will be launched.

Simultaneously, the MPL Cinchoneros warned, the Honduran Government will try to make the situation on the border with Nicaragua more tense.

To this effect, the organization said that the pretexts prepared by Tegucigalpa are an alleged Nicaraguan occupation of Honduran territory and the presumed employment of Soviet planes and military armament by the Sandinist Army.

The MPL stressed that Foreign Secretary Cesar Elvir Sierra has already begun the propaganda campaign with the official note in which he accused Managua of killing 200 Nicaraguan "refugees" on Honduran territory.

The charge was virtually denied by Government Secretary Oscar Mejia Arellano, who termed the case of the "refugees" false.

Likewise, the Honduran Army and Government at this time are relocating dozens of thousands of Salvadorans who have been in Honduras for over 3 years, the MPL reported.

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The border area must be "cleaned up" of civilians in order to facilitate the joint military activities of the Honduran and Salvadoran troops against FMLN position in Chalatenango, Morazan and Cabanas, the communique added.

"They (the refugees) are being taken at gunpoint to an area 50 km from the border, thus creating a free zone in which the TIAR forces may operate,"the MPL maintains.

The Cinchoneros recalled that over 150 U.S. officers have been in Honduras for some time now and maintained that the most reactionary Honduran officers have gotten President-elect Roberto Suazo Cordoba to support the intervention plans.

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13
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COUNTRY SECTION

NICARAGUA

D'ESCOTO DEMANDS END TO U.S. 'VERBAL TERRORISM'

PM181413 London THE GUARDIAN in English 18 Dec 81 p 6

[Report by John Rettie: "Nicaragua Seeks European Influence for U.S. Approach"]

[Text] The Nicaraguan foreign minister, Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, in London on his way home from an official visit to Moscow, said yesterday that relations with the Soviet Union were cordial because it had "respected our right to self-determination."

Relations with the United States could be just as good, he added, if Washington would show similar respect instead of the "verbal terrorism" that it had used against Nicaragua.

Asked whether he had secured more aid from the Soviet Union while in Moscow, Father D'Escoto said "this was not the object of the visit." His talks with Mr Gromyko, the Soviet foreign minister, had been concerned with the situation in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as bilateral relations.

He said one of Nicaragua's major foreign policy objects was the "diversification of our relations in the world"--something which was "synonymous with independence."

Europe was particularly important to Nicaragua, Father D'Escoto said, because "many European countries, allies of the United States, can influence Washington and help them understand that we are not anti-American, but simply nationalist." Europe had frequently suffered intervention and invasion and knew what they were like, but the United States never had.

The foreign minister said it was important that he had had direct talks with the U.S. secretary of state at the recent meeting of the Organisation of American States in St Lucia in the Caribbean. There had been no previous response in Washington to Nicaragua's appeals for such talks, but now "the door has been left open for future ministerial meetings."

He said Mr Haig had put to him the "concept of reciprocity: If Nicaragua intervened in any Central American country, the United States reserved the right to do the same. But I told him the interventionist country was not Nicaragua.

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- "We had a very, very frank talk. I told him that if the purpose of threats against
- us was to make us go back on revolutionary changes, then he was wasting his time.
- We are not about to betray ourselves."

- Asked about the extent of Nicaragua's support for guerrilla movements in El Salvador
- and elsewhere, Father D'Escoto said it was "important for any decent government to
- support, or at least express sympathy for, people fighting for their freedom."
- Support for oppressors was intolerable, but Washington was "actively interfering"
- in Salvadorean civil war.

- He confirmed reports in Washington that talks had been held in August between the
- U.S. assistant secretary of state, Mr Thomas Enders, himself and Commandante
- Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the Nicaraguan junta. Nicaragua sought understanding
- with Washington. But it would like to see the U.S. put into practice its proposal
- that both sides should abjure the use of threats or force against the other, before
- signing an agreement.

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COUNTRY SECTION

PANAMA

BRIEFS

CENTER OF SUGARCANE TECHNOLOGY--Panama City, 2 Jan (PL)--Panama will become the center of an international network for research, training and transfer of technology on the sugarcane industry. This decision is the result of talks held between Enrique Estremadoiro, secretary general of GEPLACEA (Group of Latin American and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries), and Rodrigo Tarte, general director of the Institute for Agricultural/Livestock Research (IDIAP). The establishment of this technological network on sugarcane is one of the immediate results of an agreement among KDIAP, GEPLACEA and La Victoria Sugar Corporation regarding the promotion and transfer of technology on sugarcane. In view of this, a Sugarcane Research Agency will be created here with the contribution of the technological experiences of Brazil, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Colombia. Panama will develop with these countries a coordinated program of research and training on sugarcane. As the center of this network, Panama will obtain substantial benefits which will represent an increase in its ability to obtain foreign resources and to observe the most advanced technology. As part of the mechanisms to implement this, a meeting of researchers from the previously mentioned countries will be held here in the first months of the coming year. [Text] [PA030218 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1523 GMT 2 Jan 82]

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COUNTRY SECTION

ST. VINCENT

BRIEFS

ISLAND DEVELOPMENT DISPUTE--A group of European investors based in Venezuela has proposed to establish an international financial centre and tourist development on the sparsely-populated Grenadine island of Canouan, 25 miles south of St. Vincent. A lawyer for the group, Kenneth John, said in a letter to the Vincentian newspaper last month that he had submitted the proposal to the government, but that no response had yet been received. Five opposition parties had expressed concern at reports that the government was leasing part of the four-square-mile island to foreign investors, and the Vincentian itself has condemned the government's 'clandestine behaviour' as 'abhorrent.' [Text] [London LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN in English 4 Dec 81 p 10] COPYRIGHT: LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS in English 1981

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17
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COUNTRY SECTION

VENEZUELA

BRIEFS

COMMUNISTS CONGRATULATE CUBAN ASSEMBLY LEADERS--Caracas, 7 Jan (PL)--The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV) has congratulated the president and vice president of Cuba's National Assembly, Flavio Bravo and Jorge Lezcano, respectively, for their appointment to these posts. Eduardo Gallegos Mancera, PCV international relations secretary, reiterated the Venezuelan communists' solidarity with the people of Cuba in the face of threats of aggression from the U.S. Government. The message states: "Dear Companeros: The PCV Central Committee fraternally congratulates you on the occasion of your designation--and that of Secretary Jose Aranaburo, who also has our congratulations--as the president and vice president of the assembly. We take advantage of this opportunity to ask you to convey to the Cuban people a reiteration of the Venezuelan communists' solidarity in the face of imperialist threats." [Text] [PA072025 Caracas Praela in Spanish to Praela Havana 1531 GMT 7 Jan 82]

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END

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