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Jackson, Castro Reach Meeting of Minds; American Takes His Mission to Nicaragua

By ROBERT W. MERRY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—The Rev. Jesse Jackson brought his self-styled "moral offensive" to this capital city after reaching a kind of meeting-of-minds with Cuban President Fidel Castro.

As part of a 10-point basis of agreement worked out between the U.S. politician and the Cuban leader, Mr. Castro agreed to release from Cuban prisons 22 Americans being held in connection with various criminal offenses, mostly drug charges. Mr. Jackson said he hoped to return the 22 people to the U.S. in his chartered jet today.

Then, in a subsequent development yesterday, Mr. Castro agreed to release 26 Cuban nationals held on political charges. Mr. Jackson, announcing the development to traveling journalists, said all 26 people to be released were on a list of political prisoners monitored by Amnesty International, a group concerned with human rights.

As part of his earlier understanding with Mr. Jackson, Mr. Castro also agreed to accelerate discussions with U.S. officials about the possible return to Cuba of hundreds of Cuban criminals—so called "excludables"—currently being held in U.S. prisons. These people entered the U.S. after Mr. Castro released them from Cuban prisons and funneled them into the so-called Mariel migration of Cubans into the U.S. in 1980.

These actions were announced during an extraordinary early-morning news conference that followed a seven-hour round of discussions between the Cuban dictator and the U.S. private citizen. Mr. Jackson, who interrupted his run for the presidency to embark on his whirlwind, diplomatic tour of Latin America, is operating without portfolio. But he suggests he represents what he calls "the moral high ground."

No Breakthrough Seen

Taken as a whole, yesterday's results didn't seem to represent any fundamental diplomatic breakthrough in the adversarial relationship between the two countries. Mr. Castro has initiated similar prisoner releases in the past, and the document of agreement didn't include any significant departures in the Cuban leader's previously stated positions.

But by taking Mr. Jackson's initiative se-

riously, Mr. Castro did inject some credibility into the U.S. clergyman's mission, notwithstanding his private-citizen status. Mr. Jackson reportedly was much taken with the charismatic Cuban leader. After one impassioned Castro speech, according to a Jackson aide, the American stood up and said: "Thank you, Rev. Castro."

The stated purpose of Mr. Jackson's six-day trip, scheduled to end today, is to foster peace in the war-torn Central American countries of Nicaragua and El Salvador. The U.S. government accuses Mr. Castro of fomenting some of that strife by funneling military aid to insurgents bent on toppling the El Salvador government of President Jose Duarte. The Reagan administration, meanwhile, is supporting rebels fighting against the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

During his trip, Mr. Jackson repeatedly has criticized Mr. Reagan's policy of military support for the so-called Contras in Nicaragua, but he has declined to complain about Mr. Castro's involvement in the struggle.

White House spokesman Larry Speakes said the State Department will be "anxious" to hear Mr. Jackson's views when he returns from his trip. However, Mr. Speakes said any decision on whether President Reagan will meet with Mr. Jackson won't be made until after the proposed State Department meeting.

In yesterday's document of agreement, Mr. Castro "reiterated" his support for the efforts of four Latin American countries to foster peace through negotiations. Though the aims of this so-called Contadora group—Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama—are widely lauded, no party involved in the struggle has been willing to back down militarily to facilitate negotiations.

The document of understanding also called for full normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba. "I believe that someday the relations must normalize," said Mr. Castro, adding that the current friction-filled relationship "simply cannot continue." But the document didn't contain any new specific steps toward that end.

Invitation to Castro

The document also disclosed that Mr. Jackson, "on behalf of a broad base of American citizens," had invited Mr. Castro to visit the U.S. The Cuban leader said he would consider the offer.

Other points in the document include:

—A call for an exchange of ambassadors. The document said Mr. Castro had agreed to such an exchange "pending acceptance by the U.S."

—A commitment to discuss possible liberalization of the two countries' immigration policies so those living in each country may more freely visit relatives in the other.

—A commitment to discuss the possibility of clearing the way for U.S. entry of Cubans released from Cuban jails after incarceration for political crimes. Mr. Castro agreed to allow one such political opponent of the state, a purported former Central Intelligence Agency operative named Andres Vargas Gomez, to enter the U.S. The document said Mr. Jackson also raised the issue of some Cuban nationals in prison for crimes against the state.

—A commitment by Mr. Castro to withdraw Cuban troops from the African country of Angola after "the end of aggression against Angola by South Africa as well as the complete cessation of South African support for counterrevolutionary groups opposed to the government of Angola."

—Support of Mr. Castro for Mr. Jackson's effort to celebrate U.S. friendship with its southern neighbors through a "hands across the border" day Sunday, at the U.S.-Mexican border at San Diego.