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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

• PRIORITY

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COUNTRY PANAMA

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SUBJECT

REACTION TO RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMAT RELATIONS, BOCAS DEL TORO MARCH, SITUATION APPRAISAL AS OF 4 APRIL 1964

PLACE & DATE ACQ.

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APPRAISAL: COMMENTARY

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2. THE GENERAL REACTION IN PANAMA TO THE RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES APPEARS TO BE VERY FAVORABLE. BOTH THE NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO HAVE HANDLED THE MATTER CORRECTLY AND HAVE THEREBY CAUSED A REDUCTION IN THE TENSION WHICH HAS EXISTED THIS PAST WEEK. THE CONSERVATIVE SECTOR APPEARS SATISFIED AND PLEASED WITH THE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS. THE EXTREME LEFT ON THE OTHER HAND, APPEARS TO BE SOMEWHAT CONFUSED BY DEVELOPMENTS BUT WILL PROBABLY NOT BE PREPARED TO REACT STRONGLY FOR SEVERAL DAYS. THE EXTREME LEFT IS ALSO WAITING FOR PRESIDENT CHIARI TO EXPLAIN WHAT THE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS MEANS AS FAR AS THE QUESTION OF THE 1903 TREATY IS CONCERNED.

3. IT APPEARS THAT MEMBERS OF THE VANGUARDIA ACCION NACIONAL (VAN-PRO-CASTRO REVOLUTIONARY GROUP) WILL ATTEMPT TO HOLD A SIZEABLE PUBLIC MEETING IN PANAMA CITY ON 6 APRIL IN COMMERATION OF THE CERRO TUTE UPRISING OF 1959. THE DEMONSTRATIONS OF 5 APRIL HOWEVER WILL PROBABLY BE LIMITED TO THE SOVREIGNTY MARCH ON THE BOCOS DEL TORO BANANA ZONE AND THE DEMONSTRATIONS IN SANTIAGO DE VERAGUAS IN COMMERATION OF THE CERRO TUTE. UPRISING.

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4. THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA IS WELL AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE BOCAS DEL TORO DEMONSTRATION IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS. IT IS BELIEVED THAT A VIOLENT DEMONSTRATION RESULTING IN INJURY TO WORKERS BY MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD COULD VERY WELL CAUSE DISTURBANCES IN OTHER AREAS OF PANAMA. IT HAS BEEN REPORTED THAT OTHER SECTORS OF THE COUNTRY ARE PREPARED TO REACT SYMPATHETICALLY IN THE EVENT OF SUCH AN OCCURRENCE. IT CANNOT BE SAID HOWEVER THAT SUCH VIOLENCE WILL DEFINITELY OCCUR IN BOCAS DEL TOROS.

5. RUBEN REYNA, HEAD OF THE PANAMANIAN INTERUNION COORDINATING COMMITTEE IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT HE WAS DELIGHTED THAT RELATIONS WERE BEING RESUMED AND HAD SENT A CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT CHIARI. REYNA COMMENTED FURTHER THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF CALLING A GENERAL STRIKE IN SYMPATHY OF THE BANANA WORKERS UNLESS WORKERS ARE KILLED OR INJURED AS A RESULT OF THE CHIRIQUI LAND COMPANY STRIKE TACTICS. THIS STRIKE IS CURRENTLY IN ITS EIGHTH DAY. PRESIDENT CHIARI'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE FAILED IN HIS ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE THE COMPANY TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE UNION. THE NEXT MOVES FOR SETTLEMENT ARE AS YET NOT KNOWN.

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