

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

2415

April 23, 1977

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

From: Cyrus Vance *CPV*

Subject: Senator McGovern's Memorandum on Cuba

I agree with the basic thrust of Senator McGovern's April 19 memo. There are to be sure gains for the U.S. in moving toward normalization of relations with Cuba. That is why we began the process.

True

I also agree that, tactically, a partial lifting of the embargo might help move the process along. But so far all the steps--lifting the travel restrictions, agreeing to negotiate a Governing International Fishery Agreement (GIFA), and standing-down the reconnaissance overflights--have been on our side. If only to demonstrate the seriousness of their own interest in improving relations, there should be some reciprocal steps on the part of the Cubans. Hence, during the talks next week in Havana, Ambassador Todman will tell the Cubans that the U.S. Government would be prepared to give favorable consideration to lifting the embargo on shipments of U.S. foods and medicines if Cuba were ready to take some steps to contribute to the process of improving relations--such as reinstating the hijacking agreement, releasing American political prisoners, repatriating U.S. citizens who wish to leave, and increasing visits of divided families.

I agree

Finally, a partial lifting of the embargo should not include Cuban sugar imports to the U.S. This represents a key element in the embargo and at present is one of Castro's primary objectives in his relations with the U.S. To give him access to the U.S. sugar market at the beginning of the process would be to give away most of our bargaining position. It would open

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the Administration to criticism for having made major concessions to Castro without having secured his commitment to negotiate a satisfactory settlement of compensation claims for nationalized U.S. goods and properties, and it would reduce our leverage to secure other objectives, such as repatriation of U.S. citizens, release of political prisoners, etc. Likewise abrupt reentry of Cuban sugar in the U.S. market would be a blow to other sugar producers in the Caribbean-- countries which have been friendly with us through thick and thin.

*Don't forget
Cuban troops all over
Africa*

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