

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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April 27, 1977

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

ZB

SUBJECT:

Your Request for Comments on
Senator McGovern's Memorandum
on Cuba

I transmit herewith Secretary Vance's memorandum commenting on Senator McGovern's thoughts on Cuba.

I agree

I feel strongly that a partial lifting of the embargo should not include Cuban sugar imports to the United States, and I must register my general feeling that so far we seem to be taking more initiatives towards Castro than he is towards us.

Castro's economic situation is such that he clearly needs trade with us, and I am not persuaded that the Cuban people need access to U.S. food and medicine. His adventures in Africa must involve some expenditures, and I see at this stage no special merit in making it easier for him economically by being able to sell Cuban goods in the U.S.

I agree

You promised McGovern that you will maintain a position of neutrality on his bill, and I would recommend that this posture be not that of benevolent neutrality but rather that of skeptical neutrality. I believe we should be neutral on a McGovern bill that lifts restrictions on the sale of U.S. food and medicine to the Cubans, but I believe that any lifting of the embargo on Cuban goods sold to the United States should await negotiations with the Cubans on normalization. Otherwise, Cy Vance will have little or no leverage to achieve some of the concessions that will be necessary to make normalization politically palatable to the US -- e.g., release of Americans from jail, etc.

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5/9/02 NSC ALI-77-004
5/9/02