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Castro Called JFK's Death 'Grave'

PARIS, Nov. 29.—A French news paper correspondent, Jean Daniel, has printed a story of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro's first reaction to President Kennedy's assassination.

According to M. Daniel, Castro said on hearing the news:

"President Kennedy was an enemy to whom we had become accustomed. This is a grave matter, a very grave matter."

M. Daniel was winding up a three-day interview with Castro at his country home in Varadero, Cuba, he said, on Nov. 22 when President Kennedy was shot. He had interviewed Mr. Kennedy in Washington on Oct. 24.

President Oswaldo Dorticos phoned to Castro, M. Daniel said, to tell him the

United States' President had been shot.

"What! An assassination?" he heard Castro say in Spanish.

Then Castro spoke to others present.

"Kennedy has been shot," he announced.

Castro turned back to the phone. "Was he badly hurt?" he asked. What he was told, M. Daniel didn't know.

Castro hung up the phone. "That's bad news," he declared, and repeated it three times — the way he does nearly everything.

The phone rang again, and Castro evidently was told Mr. Kennedy was still alive and doctors hoped to have him.

"Good—has been re-elected," said Castro.

Later he was told President Kennedy had died.

"Everything is changed," Castro exclaimed. "Everything is going to change. The United States occupies such a position in the world that the death of a President of that country affects millions of persons in every part of the globe.

"The cold war, relations with Russia, Latin America,

Cuba, the Negro problem — all that has to be re-thought.

"Let me tell you something. President Kennedy was an enemy to whom we had become accustomed. This is a grave matter, a very grave matter . . ."

A little later Castro said:

"Now they must find the assassin quickly, very quickly. Otherwise, you'll see, they will try to saddle us with it."

By then, of course, Castro had turned on the radio, and heard he killer was "a Russian spy — a spy married to a Russian."

"Here it comes," said Castro. "It will be my turn next."

B. King
W. H. R.

John F. Kennedy file 5-87

- The Washington Post and Times Herald _____
- The Washington Daily News 7
- The Evening Star _____
- New York Herald Tribune _____
- New York Journal-American _____
- New York Mirror _____
- New York Daily News _____
- New York Post _____
- The New York Times _____
- The Worker _____
- The New Leader _____
- The Wall Street Journal _____
- The National Observer _____
- People's World _____
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