

Castro: CIA ^{12/19/77} Makes U.S. A 'Monster' ^{part}

From News Dispatches

Speaking in Havana at the opening of Cuba's first Communist Party congress, Prime Minister Fidel Castro called the United States "a monster" and recounted a list of crimes allegedly carried out against his country by the Central Intelligence Agency.

The congress, which began Wednesday, is regarded as a milestone in the institutionalization of the Cuban revolution. Major subjects on its agenda include a five-year economic plan and a draft constitution to be submitted to a referendum Feb. 15.

Castro, in a marathon address that began Wednesday and was continued yesterday, received a standing ovation when he declared that the Cuban army had "shed blood more than once in other countries threatened by imperialist aggression and had helped organize the armed forces and militia of other progressive countries."

Cuba reportedly has sent

arms and thousands of troops to Angola in recent weeks to aid Soviet-backed forces against Western-supported factions in that country's civil war.

Castro devoted most of his seven-hour report on Wednesday to a review of internal affairs. He recounted his government's achievements in the 17 years since the overthrow of dictator Fulgencio Batista, admitting economic and political mistakes and praising the Soviet Union for crucial support.

Castro accused the CIA of organizing "dozens of attempts against the lives of the leaders of the Cuban revolution" and he added, "Leading members of the Mafia were also contacted for these ends."

There were smiles among the 3,000 delegates and the Communist and Socialist officials from 85 foreign countries when Castro spoke of a CIA scheme to expose him to ridicule by poisoning his cigars with a drug that would cause disorientation before he delivered a speech.

Many burst into laughter as he told of a powder that was supposed to be spread on his boots by CIA operatives to make his beard fall out.