

NYTimes AUG 3 1974
Castro Said to Foresee a Thaw With U.S.

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2—Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba envisions a resumption of normal relations with the United States, and he has told two American interviewers the sequence he has in mind, covering such details as trade and tourism.

"He has obviously given the matter a great deal of thought," said Frank F. Mankiewicz, who along with Kirby Jones spent a total of about 25 hours with Mr. Castro between July 17 and 20.

Mr. Mankiewicz, director of Senator George McGovern's 1972 Presidential campaign and now head of the National Executive Conference, said Mr. Castro had impressed him as being "less hostile" to the United States Government than in past years.

Pat M. Holt, chief of the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who also met Premier Castro and toured Cuba in July, released a report today in which he concluded "that Cubans would welcome better relations with the United States."

A specialist in Latin-American affairs for many years, Mr. Holt also concluded "that the United States policy of isolating Cuba has been a failure."

"With the help of massive assistance from the Soviet Union and high world commodity prices," he said, "the Cubans are the verge of making their system work—that is to say, of constructing a Socialist showcase in the Western hemisphere."

Mr. Holt recommended that the Nixon Administration review its policy toward Cuba and, in the meantime, take some "modest steps" toward improving relations.

He proposed that the State Department cease restricting travel by Americans to Cuba and relax restrictions on Cuban diplomats at the United Nations, who are confined to New York City. Mr. Holt called the latter "cruel and unusual punishment." He said "any initiative in improving relations will have to come from the United States."

Mr. Mankiewicz and Mr. Jones filmed about 12 hours of their talks with Mr. Castro. But they are holding the text about future Cuban relations with the United States until they have

sold television rights for the Castro interview.

Mr. Mankiewicz would say only that there was "more to the problem" of re-establishing relations between Havana and Washington than Mr. Castro's demand that the United States lift its 12-year-old trade embargo against Cuba. Washington broke diplomatic ties with Cuba in 1961.

"That is one of the tangibles," he said, "but there are some intangibles, too." He said the interview would show that Mr. Castro was considering offering some concessions to the United States.

Mr. Mankiewicz said he had not raised the issue of the continuing imprisonment in Cuba of people charged with political crimes, including some American citizens.

He quoted Mr. Castro as having remarked off-camera that American policy made him think: "It's as though Cuba is the only country in the world toward which the American Secretary of State is still John Foster Dulles."

In the interview itself, Mr. Castro found words of praise for Secretary of State Kissinger and for the late President John F. Kennedy, but not for President Nixon.

Mr. Mankiewicz released two pieces of the lengthy text concerning East-West détente and the significance of the 1973 Havana-Washington agreement on curbing of airline hijacking.

Concern for Public Opinion

On the pact with Washington, Mr. Castro said:

"We took an important step when we signed the hijacking

agreement. The determining factor that led us to sign the agreement was really a concern for international public opinion—for the people of the United States, and it was done in a favorable spirit in an attempt to solve a serious problem."

On détente, the Cuban leader said:

"We have lived in the past few years in a period of more peace and everyone has welcomed the end of the cold war."

However, the cold war is still imposed on some countries.

With Cuba a cold war policy is still applied. It has not changed for us in that sense. But we nonetheless see with satisfaction the cessation of the cold war, thinking not only in our own interests."

Mr. Mankiewicz said other portions of the interviews covered topics such as Mr. Castro's reflections on the 1961 invasion of Cuba by United States-supported Cuban exiles, and the 1962 crisis that developed when the Soviet union emplaced missiles in Cuba.

In addition Mr. Castro described a visit by a special representative of President Kennedy in the fall of 1963, and the Cuban leader's estimate that "Kennedy was the only President with the courage to change his mind" about Cuba.



Associated Press
Frank E. Mankiewicz