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WITH KEY WEST CUBANS (330)
AN AP NEWS ANALYSIS
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WASHINGTON, JAN. 3 (AP)-THERE ARE REASONS TO SPECULATE THAT THE OLD CUBAN DICTATOR, FULGENCIO BATISTA, MAY HAVE HAD A HAND IN THE WEEKEND ATTEMPT TO LAUNCH AN INVASION OF HAITI FROM THE FLORIDA KEYS.

BATISTA, LAST REPORTED IN PORTUGAL, HAS KEPT HIS HAND-- AND A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF MONEY--IN EFFORTS AGAINST THE CUBAN REGIME OF FIDEL CASTRO.

THE KEYS EXPEDITION DOUBTLESS ALSO HAD THE ENTHUSIASTIC BACKING, SENTIMENTAL OF NOT FINANCIAL, OF HAITIAN EXILES WHO ARE WEARY OF THE STRANGE DICTATORSHIP OF FRANCOIS (PAPA DOC) DUVALIER.

THE WHOLE IDEA, OF COURSE, WAS TO INVADE HAITI, TOPPLE AN UNPOPULAR REGIME AND SET UP MILITARY HEADQUARTERS FOR HARASSMENT AND EVENTUAL MILITARY ATTACK ON CUBA.

ON PAPER, THE IDEA MAY APPEAR TO HAVE A NUMBER OF ADVANTAGES. SUCH A FOREIGN BEACHHEAD WOULD MINIMIZE UNITED STATES RESPONSIBILITY FOR ATTACKS ON CUBA.

HAITI IS WITHIN ABOUT 100 MILES OF CUBA, WHERE A HUGE COASTLINE WOULD BE HARD TO DEFEND.

BUT MAJOR FACTORS WOULD OPPOSE THE SUCCESS OF THE PLAN.

HAITI IS IN SUCH POLITICAL CHAOS, WITH SUCH DIVERSE ELEMENTS INVOLVED, THAT IT WOULD VBE AN UNEASY BEACHHEAD.

CUBA IS THE BEST EQUIPPED NATION MILITARILY IN ALL LATIN AMERICA, WITH THE MOST SOPHISTICATED OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSE WEAPONS OF ANY NATION SOUTH OF THE RIO GRANDE.

CUBANS AND THE WORLD GENERALLY WOULD NOT REGARD BATISTA AS AN APPROPRIATE MAN TO TAKE OVER CUBA ONCE AGAIN.

ROLANDO MASFERRER, A LONG-TIME ASSOCIATE OF BATISTA AND A TOP FIGURE IN THE INVASION PLOT, LIKewise IS NOT A POPULAR LEADER AMONG CUBAN EXILES.

AS EAGER AS THEY MIGHT BE TO SEE CASTRO TOPPLED, IT WOULD GIVE LITTLE SATISFACTION TO THEM TO SEE THEIR COUNTRY ONCE AGAIN IN THE HANDS OF BATISTA AND HIS FOLLOWERS, WHO ARE ACCUSED OF ROBBING CUBA DURING TWO EXTENDED PERIODS IN POWER, 1933-44, AND 1952-59.

THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE SITUATION ARE SUCH THAT, AS
MUCH AS IT MIGHT WISH TO SEE CASTRO OUSTED, THE UNITED STATES WOULD
FIND ITSELF COMPELLED TO BLOCK SUCH AN EFFORT.

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