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Scan ID: 170679SS
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1996

Dear Representative Burton:

I am writing in response to your letter regarding the U.S. response to the Cuban shootdown of two civilian aircraft.

You will recall that immediately after the shootdown I said -- and later told the families of the victims when I met them in Miami in April -- that Cuba's cruel and callous attack on three American citizens and one U.S. resident is a blatant violation of international law that cannot go unpunished. Speaking on behalf of our entire nation, I expressed my determination to take action in response to Cuba's cold-blooded act as well as my deepest condolences and respect for the families of those who died seeking to promote democracy in Cuba.

I believe that the measures the United States has taken to date demonstrate our resolve to further isolate the Cuban regime from the international community of nations and to maintain the broad bipartisanship that is a central feature of our nation's policy toward Cuba.

In response to the Cuban shootdown, I immediately asked my Administration to work vigorously with the Congress to reach rapid agreement on the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act, which you helped author. Less than two weeks later, I signed the bill into law in the name of the victims of the shootdown. The Administration is now moving expeditiously to implement the provisions of the legislation. Constructive discussions have been held with key congressional offices, and the Administration will be issuing federal guidelines on the implementation of Title IV of the Act within a few weeks. The State Department has informed foreign governments about the provisions of Title IV and has sent letters to several foreign companies advising them that their activities involving confiscated U.S. properties in Cuba may bring them within the Title's purview. Additional information is being collected and reviewed to enable the Administration to make exclusion determinations, if warranted, by the end of June.

I am convinced that the LIBERTAD Act sends a strong, bipartisan signal to the Cuban regime that we will maintain and intensify our efforts to promote democracy through the economic embargo.

Indeed, I believe it already has had a real and immediate impact, as evidenced by the decision by CEMEX, a Mexican company, to withdraw from Cuba. At the same time, the LIBERTAD Act enables us to advance the cause of freedom in Cuba through continued support for human rights activists and others striving to build a democratic future.

I ordered other unilateral steps as well: the indefinite suspension of direct charter flights between Miami and Havana; stricter limits on U.S. visas issued to Cuban officials; and new restrictions on the movement of Cuban diplomats within the United States, an issue you raise in your letter. In fact, new travel controls are now in place that impose more stringent advance notification requirements and require Cuban officials to obtain approval for certain meetings. Referencing these new restrictions, the State Department recently denied a request by Cuban diplomats to meet with certain local officials in the United States.

Your letter takes issue with the Administration's statement to participants in the May 1 flotilla. I believe that nothing in that statement can be construed as giving license to the Cuban government to detain United States citizens; the Cuban government is well aware of our position on this matter and on its general obligation to abide by international law. My Administration will continue to do everything within its power to hold the Cuban government to this obligation. However, our duty to all United States citizens is to provide them with accurate information about the practices of countries to which they may travel -- even those practices with which we strongly disagree.

Finally, let me assure you that my Administration is eager to work closely with the Congress in implementing our bipartisan policy toward Cuba. We have appreciated the opportunity to brief interested members of Congress on the various aspects of this policy and look forward to continued cooperation in our efforts to promote a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba.

I appreciate hearing your views on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A


The Honorable Dan Burton
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1406

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ID 9603263

REFERRAL

DATE: 11 JUN 96

MEMORANDUM FOR: WH STRIPPING DESK

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: TO: BURTON, DAN

SOURCE: PRESIDENT

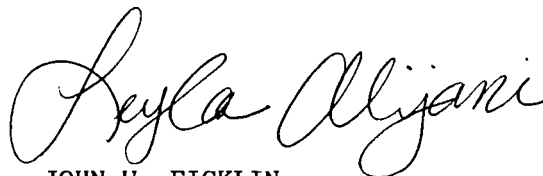
DATE: 09 JUN 96

SUBJ: RESPONSE TO REP BURTON LTR ON CUBA

REQUIRED ACTION: FOR DISPATCH

DUE DATE: 13 JUN 96

COMMENT:


FOR JOHN W. FICKLIN
NSC RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICE

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
June 7, 1996

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ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LANK *AL*
JOHN HILLEY *JH*

SUBJECT: Response to Representative Burton Letter on Cuba

Purpose

To respond to a letter from Representative Burton.

Background

Representative Burton wrote to express concern about purported lack of action on the Helms-Burton bill and on other measures you announced in response to the Cuban shootdown. He also criticizes the statement issued by the State Department on the eve of the May 1 Cuban-American flotilla. That statement warned participants that the Cuban government might detain persons who entered its territorial waters or airspace and that Cuba bars consular access to imprisoned Cuban-Americans because it does not recognize dual nationality.

The proposed response describes the measures the Administration has taken and defends the State Department's statement.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the attached letter to Representative Burton at Tab A.

Attachments

Tab A Letter to Representative Burton
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

Jodd,
OK for
AP.
[Signature]

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Sincerely,

A

The Honorable Dan Burton
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1406

6/10/96
(date)

NSC PACKAGE

RM:

OK FOR SIGNATURE PER TODD STERN

RETURN ALL LETTER(S) AND ORIGINAL MEMO(S) TO STERN'S
OFFICE

Okay for Signature by
Staff Secretary TODD STERN per J.T.
Date 6.10.96

J.T.
(Initials)