

...CUBA...

**SUMMARY**

**Assuming the continuation of massive assistance from the Soviet Union and of high world commodity prices, the Cubans are on the verge of making their system work.**

According to Cuban figures, they already have the highest per capita gross national product in Latin America, with the possible exception of Venezuela.

Shortages in Cuba are more an inconvenience than a hardship, reminiscent of the situation in the United States during World War II. Such goods as are available are rationed strictly and to all appearances equitably, at least as far as necessities are concerned.

The Cuban Government is devoting more attention to political organization—Cubans generally are incredibly organized—and has started a process looking to the election of a pyramidal structure of local, provincial, and national popular assemblies.

This is probably a measure of the growing self-confidence of the Revolution. The politics and economy of Cuba are controlled by a curious mixture of carrot stick and exhortation. The policy of no material incentives for workers has been abandoned, and a system of productivity norms has been substituted for it.

Although their economic prospects are improving, Cubans take a modest view of their development future. They shun a consumer-oriented society, but they take great pride in their accomplishments in the field of social services, particularly health and education.

One senses in Cuba a growing self-confidence, in part because of the Revolution's accomplishments, in part because of its growing acceptance in Latin America and the world generally.

Trade with Latin America, Europe, and Japan is increasing.

Cubans will make no move to improve their relations with the United States until the economic boycott, which they call a blockade, is lifted. My impression is that they would nonetheless welcome initiatives from the United States.

Recommendations are made for a re-examination of U.S. policy toward Cuba and especially of sundry statutory provisions relating to Cuba and to third countries trading with Cuba.

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With the help of massive assistance from the Soviet Union and high world commodity prices, the Cubans are on the verge of making their system work—that is to say, of constructing a socialist show case in the Western Hemisphere.

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