

CN 65****

C/S - CASTRO: SOVIET INTERVENTION TRAGIC EVENT (W/CN 51)

HAVANA, AUG. 23, REUTER - CUBAN PREMIER FIDEL CASTRO TONIGHT DESCRIBED SOVIET INTERVENTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AS A TRAGIC EVENT JUSTIFIED BY THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN STATES MARCH TOWARDS CAPITALISM.

IN THE FIRST OFFICIAL CUBAN STATEMENT ON THE SOVIET INVASION, DR CASTRO SAID: "I THINK THE JUSTIFICATION IS THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS MARCHING TOWARDS CAPITALISM."

HE ADDED: "THAT IS ENOUGH; NO FIG LEAVES ARE NEEDED AS AN EXCUSE."

DR CASTRO, SPEAKING IN A NATIONWIDE RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCAST, SAID THAT TO BE INVADED BY THE ARMIES OF OTHER COUNTRIES EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE SOCIALIST NATIONS WAS A TRAGIC EVENT WHICH RECALLED PREVIOUS SIMILAR TRAGEDIES.

"TO HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THAT OR TO DEAL WITH CAPITALISM WAS A BITTER AND TRAGIC SITUATION FOR THE CZECH PEOPLE," HE DECLARED.

STANDING BENEATH A LARGE PORTRAIT OF DEAD REVOLUTIONARY LEADER ERNESTO "CHE" GUEVARA, DR CASTRO SAID: "IT IS USELESS TO SAY THAT CZECH SOVEREIGNTY HAS NOT BEEN VIOLATED.

"IT HAS BEEN, AND FLAGRANTLY, AND THAT CANNOT BE DEFENDED LEGALLY."

DEFENCE OF THE INTERVENTION HAD TO BE OF A POLITICAL NATURE, HE ADDED. (MORE)

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