

CN 89

C/S -- 0700 INTRO -- CASTRO STATEMENT

HAVANA, AUG. 24, REUTER - CUBAN PREMIER FIDEL CASTRO HAS DESCRIBED SOVIET INTERVENTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AS A FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF SOVEREIGNTY - BUT HE SAID IT WAS JUSTIFIED BY PRAGUES MARCH TOWARDS CAPITALISM.

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

HE ADDED IN A NATIONWIDE RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCAST "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, DR CASTRO SAID.

"WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE CZECHS WERE RETURNING TOWARDS CAPITALISM AND WOULD INEXORABLY GO INTO THE ARMS OF CAPITALISM," HE DECLARED.

RF/U/B 0706/68 LZ