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*file 3/9*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 12, 1976

Jim Shuman -

The attached was returned in the  
President's outbox. A copy is sent  
to you for possible use in the  
President's Briefing Books.

Jim Connor

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Jim -

In outbox --- what was this for?

a copy

Any action?      Should ~~it~~ go to Jim Shuman ?

Trudy

US POLICY TOWARDS CUBA

I. Reagan Charges

On Sunday's Meet the Press, Governor Reagan made the following charges about our policy towards Cuba. He said last May President Ford and Secretary Kissinger decided to open up relations with Cuba. In July we persuaded the OAS to lift the embargo against Cuba, twisting the arms of the other Latin Americans to accomplish it. The resolution passed by one vote. The Commerce Department permitted US companies to start trading with Cuba. A McGovern adviser was appointed in the State Department to preside over the policy. He testified on the Hill that we should relax relations with Cuba and at the same time the Commerce Department testified in favor of opening up trade relations. It also transferred responsibility for trade with Cuba from its Bureau of International Relations to East-West Trade, thus putting the stamp of approval on our recognition of Cuba as a Soviet Satellite. [When asked what he would do, Reagan suggested that we go back to the OAS with a request that it reinstate the embargo, get the Commerce Department to go back to our embargo, and ask (Assistant Secretary) Rogers where he stands on the issue.]

II. The Facts

By the Fall of 1974, nine countries of the hemisphere had established relations with Cuba and there was great pressure on the US to agree to OAS action to lift the obligatory sanctions imposed by it in 1962 and 1964. In the Fall of that year, Venezuela, Colombia, and Costa Rica requested a special meeting of the OAS Organ of Consultation to consider Cuban sanctions. The US abstained in the vote but a simple majority registered in favor of the resolution which was not binding since a two-thirds vote was required. The issue continued to dominate inter-American relations. A new OAS meeting was called for July of 1975 in San Jose, Costa Rica. At this meeting eleven OAS members cosponsored a resolution which left the sanctions up to each individual country. Two more than the two-thirds necessary passed the resolution with the US voting in favor this time. Only three countries opposed it. In August the US announced it would lift sanctions imposed on third countries which decided to engage in trade with Cuba. We have not modified our bilateral sanctions against Cuba. Statements were made in testimony for the House and public speeches that we were prepared

to discuss with the Cuban the resolution of our problems. No government official has spoken of relaxing tension. William Rogers was appointed Assistant Secretary of State in September 1974. He had no relation with McGovern or that campaign. Export controls have been administered by the Bureau of East-West Trade in the Department of Commerce for many years.

### III. Talking Points

1. The US action with regard to Cuba was taken in the context of our relations with the countries of the hemisphere and their strong desire to establish their own policies toward Cuba.
2. There has been no modification of US bilateral sanctions against Cuba.
3. The actions taken by us were (1) to agree to support a majority of the OAS which strongly favored permitting each country to follow its own policy, and (2) to permit subsidiaries of US companies abroad to conform to the policy towards Cuba of the country in which it was located, thus sparing it from being found in contravention of local laws.
4. US action was taken in order to strengthen and preserve the OAS, a majority of whose members sought this change and a substantial number of whom had already established relations with Cuba in defiance of the OAS resolution.
5. Statements made by Secretary Kissinger and Assistant Secretary Rogers indicated our willingness to talk to Cuba in an effort to resolve outstanding problems. It emphasized the importance of reciprocal actions by Cuba. Attention was called to problems of human rights, political prisoners, compensation for seized assets, etc.