

arrest. Mr. Carrillo was until lately the Cuban Ambassador in Ottawa and if he was charged on account of his official activities while in Ottawa, this might involve criticism of the Government here. For this reason, the present inclination was if Mr. Castro comes to Ottawa to do the minimum which would be possible without giving offense. The plan was for the Postmaster General to give a small luncheon and to arrange a short appointment with the Prime Minister on the 28th of April.

4. I added that considering Mr. Castro's record, we were a little worried as to what he might say publicly and as to the nature of some of his requests. It would be our hope that during his stay in Ottawa no ill-considered statements would be made concerning relations with other countries or investments. We were hopeful that the United States authorities concerned would appreciate our attitude concerning Mr. Castro's visit to Canada. As far as we could, we were trying to parallel the action which was being taken by the United States authorities.⁵⁰⁵

5. Mr. Rewinkel said that he was grateful for this background information which he would pass on to Washington and he added that he understood fully our difficulties.⁵⁰⁶

M. CADIEUX

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DEA/4568-40

*Note du sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
pour le premier ministre*

*Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
to Prime Minister*

CONFIDENTIAL

[Ottawa], April 23, 1959

RECENT EVENTS IN CUBA

The most significant factor which has emerged during the first 3½ months in office of the Cuban revolutionary government is that Prime Minister Fidel Castro appears to have taken complete personal charge of the affairs of the country.

Dr. Castro was sworn in as Prime Minister on February 16 when Dr. José Miro Cardona, who had become Prime Minister following Batista's downfall, resigned because he had too little real authority and had to refer to Castro for the smallest decisions, even though the latter held no formal appointment in the Government. However, the official reason given for Dr. Cardona's resignation on February 13 was that he had completed his main task, which was to draft a Fundamental Law intended to replace the 1950 constitution until the next elections. One of the major effects of this new Fundamental Law was the lowering of the age limit for the presidency from 35 to 30, which now makes Dr. Castro (aged 32) eligible for that office.

Dr. Castro's continuing practice of making spontaneous pronouncements on every subject at almost any time or place is causing ill-will, even among his own supporters. The "war crimes trials" have also lowered his prestige, not only abroad; they are reportedly being criticized in Cuba, particularly following the re-trial and sentencing to long prison terms under Castro's personal orders of 45 airforce personnel originally acquitted by a tribunal. Dr. Castro's recent

⁵⁰⁵ Note marginale : / Marginal note:

No security. [Auteur inconnu/author unknown]

⁵⁰⁶ Le 22 avril, les Affaires extérieures furent informées que Castro serait forcé d'écourter sa visite. Il ne passa que quelques heures à Montréal et ne se rendit pas à Ottawa.

On April 22, External Affairs was informed that Castro would be obliged to cut his visit short. He spent only a few hours in Montreal, and did not visit Ottawa.