

we indicated we had no objections. For their own part, however, they would not be opposed to such an export.

5. The fact that the United States Government is prepared to allow the export of an aircraft of this type to Cuba even though the Cuban Government has been indulging in a violent anti-American propaganda campaign, makes it difficult for us to refuse the application. The Canadian firm, of course, is most anxious to sell the aircraft and our refusal to grant an export permit knowing that a basically similar aircraft could be exported from the United States is another factor making refusal difficult. On the other hand, the Beaver aircraft in question being fitted with floats and with wing tanks capable of extending its range, could be used in offensive action against the Dominican Republic such as in landing agents in the country, or could be used by Castro against insurgents in Cuba should open revolt break out.

6. Although in approving the export of the aircraft we may lay ourselves open to domestic political criticisms should the aircraft in fact be used in Cuba for other than peaceful purposes, I believe that on balance we should approve its exports. However, in making this recommendation with respect to this one aircraft I believe that the over-all policy with regard to the Caribbean area should not be changed until there is evidence of a lessening of tension in the area.⁵¹²

[H.C. GREEN]

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DEA/11044-AK-40

L'ambassadeur au Cuba
au sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Ambassador in Cuba
to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs

LETTER NO. L-5

Havana, January 5, 1960

SECRET

Reference: Your telegram ET-1637 of December 30, 1959.†

EXPORT OF BEAVER AIRCRAFT TO CUBA

The Cabinet decision not to authorize the export of a Beaver aircraft has been communicated to the Director of the Agrarian Institute by letter today.

2. Today just after our letter had been sent, we had a call from Captain Eduardo Ferrer, Inspector General of the Airforce, accompanied by a salesman who was obviously interested in this particular sale. Ferrer, who is a pilot of long experience, gives the impression of being sincere. He explained to us in considerable detail just what the Cubans want to do with this Beaver, including transporting men and materials to the very extensive reclamation works which are now going on in the great Zapata swamp on the south coast. Castro visits this project quite frequently and we were told that of the 7 Beavers now owned by the Cubans, 4 are out of commission altogether, and the others are not in first-class flying condition. Castro, therefore, has been making these trips and even longer ones in a helicopter and Captain Ferrer is obviously concerned about the possible danger to his Prime Minister in making long trips in this way.

⁵¹²

Le Cabinet étudia ce mémoire le 1^{er} décembre. La licence d'exportation fut refusée.

This memo was considered by Cabinet on December 1. The export permit was refused.