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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ WMINTEL NOFORN 4702

DIAD IN 318-7A (A OF: 1350 EST 14 NOV 79)

SUBJ: DIA DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE NOTICE (DIN) (U)

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CUBA: ~~MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.~~ (U)

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1. ~~(C)~~ ABOUT 2,500 CUBAN DOCTORS, NURSES, AND MEDICAL TECHNICIANS ARE REPORTEDLY SERVING WITH MEDICAL BRIGADES AND PUBLIC HEALTH UNITS IN 20 COUNTRIES OF AFRICA, ASIA, THE CARIBBEAN, AND IN NICARAGUA. AS AN INSTRUMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY, THESE MEDICAL PERSONNEL -- MOST OF WHOM ARE LOCATED IN ALGERIA, ETHIOPIA, IRAQ, AND LIBYA -- CONSTITUTE ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF ALL CUBAN CIVILIAN WORKERS ABROAD.

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2. ~~(S)~~ A YEAR AGO, CASTRO EMPHASIZED THE HIGH PRIORITY ACCORDED TO MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR FULFILLING CUBA'S DOMESTIC NEEDS AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS. AS PART OF A LONG-RANGE PLAN FOR EXPANDED TRAINING, MEDICAL FACILITIES EVENTUALLY WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN EACH OF ITS 14 PROVINCES TO ACCOMMODATE AN ENROLLMENT CAPACITY OF 30,000 STUDENTS. ALL GRADUATES WILL THEN SERVE 3 YEARS WHERE THEIR SERVICES ARE NEEDED, AFTER WHICH THEY MAY SECURE JOBS WITHIN THE DOMESTIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

3. ~~(S//NWINTTEL//NOFORN)~~ A RECENT REPORT PROVIDES AN INSIGHT INTO FOREIGN SERVICE BY DOCTORS. THEY ARE SUPPOSEDLY VOLUNTEERS FROM THESE CATEGORIES: THOSE WHO ARE AFRAID TO SAY "NO;" THOSE EAGER TO SERVE; AND THOSE WHO ARE SO UNHAPPY IN CUBA THEY WILL GO ANYWHERE. DOCTORS' SALARIES ARE PAID BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT DIRECTLY TO HAVANA WHICH, IN TURN, SENDS THE MONEY TO THE FAMILIES OF THE DOCTORS CONCERNED. THE BEST DOCTORS ARE ALLEGEDLY SENT TO THE OIL-RICH COUNTRIES WHERE PAY IS CONSIDERABLY BETTER.

4. ~~(S//NWINTTEL//NOFORN)~~ THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ON CUBAN HOSPITALS IS NOT CLEAR. WHEREAS SOME SOURCES INDICATE THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF HOSPITALS ARE ADVERSELY AFFECTED OTHERS ATTRIBUTE THE PRESENCE ABROAD OF CUBAN MEDICAL PERSONNEL TO

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AN EXCESS DOMESTIC SUPPLY. FOREIGN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE, HOWEVER, IS UNLIKELY TO BE REDUCED FOR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REASONS. THESE WOPS PROVIDE BADLY NEEDED FOREIGN EXCHANGE AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS AT MINIMAL COST TO THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT. MOREOVER, CUBAN MEDICAL PERSONNEL OFTEN SERVE AS A COVER FOR MILITARY ADVISERS, PARTICULARLY IN COUNTRIES RIPE FOR EXPANSION OF CUBAN IDEOLOGY.

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