

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

MIAMI AND PENSACOLA PRESS CONFERENCES

March 3, 1972

The American people welcome relaxation of tensions in our ever-shrinking world. I join with them in welcoming the President's talks with the Chinese and the Soviet leaders.

I have dedicated my life to the pursuit of peace and the search for disarmament. But we must recognize that a truly peaceful world is not yet with us.

We must not relax our dedication to the pursuit of peace. But neither can we relax our dedication to the pursuit of an adequate defense. We must successfully continue the SALT talks, just as we must maintain a strong defense.

We must not let our future hopes blind us to our current problems. And one such problem we must see clearly is the build-up of Soviet naval operations.

The Soviet Navy is stepping up its active presence in the Caribbean -- quietly, continually, and quickly. It is quite likely that during the decade of the 1970's the Soviet naval presence in the Caribbean and off U.S. shores may be comparable to the present Russian activity in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

We must recognize that the future security of our Southern coasts and our Caribbean neighbors is under severe challenge. And what is our government's response? Secretary Laird, in the annual Defense Department Posture Statement, and President Nixon, in his "state of the world" message, inadequately recognized the current buildup. Only one brief line in each report vaguely mentions the increased Soviet naval presence. The security of our people and the defense of our nation demand greater understanding of the Russian build-up in the Caribbean.

We can no longer be blind to the growing Soviet presence near our shores. The facts must be presented to the American people.

1. The Soviet Cuban base at Cienfuegos is being upgraded -- in apparent violation of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. agreement of understanding of October 1970. That agreement provides that the Russians would not station new nuclear equipped ships at the port and provides that the port would not be upgraded to serve that capability.

Cienfuegos can now easily be converted to a forward base facility from an anchorage base. It can service Polaris-type Soviet "Y" submarines. This means Cienfuegos now contains access to material and supply support, moorings for submarine tenders, and radioactive barges for testing, deactivation, or standdown of nuclear plants. It is a permanently modern logistics base. While Castro controls Cuba it is a potential danger to our security.

2. A deserting Cuban fighter-bomber disclosed the serious weaknesses in the U.S. warning system by flying into Miami with little or no detection. A Cubana Airlines plane flew into New Orleans undetected by our radar. Vulnerability is becoming open. It must be stopped.

3. Soviet naval task forces and Cuban naval units have held joint anti-submarine exercises in the Gulf of Mexico only 30 miles off the U.S. coast.

We must recognize the crucial importance of the Caribbean to our security and our allies' safety.

-- The protection of the Panama Canal route is vital -- for the transportation of needed raw materials within the hemisphere and for the fulfillment of our commercial and military obligations in the Pacific -- for Japan and all of Asia.

-- The Russians could deploy their ships in the Caribbean as a diversionary tactic to make us respond by weakening our presence in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and in other areas.

Strategic deterrence in the Caribbean does not work on the same level as it does elsewhere. Our interest in the Caribbean demands predominant strategic superiority and not just parity.

We must also recognize the definite political and psychological risks that the Soviet presence entails. Not only can it serve to undermine the American position, but it can supplant our influence with its own. Our sense of security in the Caribbean all too easily could become a tenuous insecurity.

What should the American response be?

First -- we must clearly recognize the threat.

Second -- The President should seek, when he travels to Moscow this spring, an expansion of the October, 1970 agreement to further restrict Soviet naval activity in the Caribbean. The Russians must understand that we will not tolerate any increased activity on their part -- just as they would not accept any on our part in the Baltic or Barents Seas.

Third -- We must immediately increase our surveillance facilities in the Caribbean and our coastal waters. Our present low level of surveillance is a direct invitation to the Russian Navy.

Fourth -- We must upgrade the importance of Latin America and the Caribbean in our foreign policies. We must realize that ultimately our security will not rest on strategic deployments but on the long-term friendships that we establish with our neighbors.

In the long horizon of President Nixon's world travels he has lost sight of our own back yard. We must re-establish policies that can build a common community of interest with our neighbors to the South.

I do not call for a militaristic America. Nor do I call for a weak America. But I do call for a government that recognizes that we are, that we must be, a maritime power -- an Atlantic, a Pacific, and a Caribbean power.

I do not say we must respond with a massively larger defense budget. On the contrary. But I do say we must have a strengthened, a more rational defense posture.

The President himself has said that we should bargain from a position of strength. But he has assumed a position of weakness both in our policies and in our actions in the Caribbean.

At a time when the Soviet Union has expressed a willingness to negotiate arms control agreements, it is surely time to negotiate a limitation on their activities in the Caribbean.

Our security must be protected. Most of all, it must be protected close to home.

# # # # #

STATEMENT BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY ON CUBA

For more than a dozen years the Castro regime has ruled Cuba with an iron hand -- and all too frequently the iron hand has been a clenched fist closing in on the Cuban people.

The Cuban people have suffered greatly. The door to political freedom is shut tight. The door to individual initiative and achievement is heavily padlocked. And the door to economic survival is quickly closing.

The great and immediate tragedy for the Cuban people is that Castro's misplanned economy is a failure.

-- The per capita income after a decade of Communist rule was \$280 -- about \$120 less than it was at the time Castro took power.

-- The average GNP growth rate per capita for the 1960's, Castro's decade of decline, was negative. The Gross National Product declined at an annual rate of 3 percent or more.

-- Cuba's exaggerated and unrealistic plans for rapid industrialization have been largely abandoned. Sugar -- heavily supported by the Russians -- remains the staple of a one-crop economy.

-- Workers and farmers have joined the refugee flow of professionals and middle class families forced to flee to foreign safety for survival.

Consumer goods diminish as ration controls squeeze tighter and tighter.

We must call out, we must not forget the plight of the Cuban people. We must not forget our heritage of friendship with the people of Cuba as they struggle for simple survival.

The romantic appeal of the Cuban revolution has long since faded throughout the Americas. The peoples of Latinw America know progress does not follow the Castro route.

The tradition of Cuban liberty is a great one that cannot be wiped away by a callous and incompetent government.

We cannot hear the cries of depression and decline without sympathy and compassion. The dimensions of the suffering of the Cuban people cross borders and span the seas.

The American people, individually and together, remember Cuba and the great potential of her people. The soul of Cuba sleeps, but not forever.

The doors to freedom and opportunity will never be permanently shut to the people of Cuba. Of this there can be no doubt. With courage and fortitude, Cuba will endure.

MEMORANDUM

March 2, 1972

TO: Senator Humphrey

FROM: Mark Epstein

SUBJECT: Award Presentation Friday Morning

You will receive the "Democrat of the Year" award of the Latin American Club of Dade County. Lazard Albo, President of the Club, will present the plaque. You will be placing a wreath at the foot of the Jose Marti Statue, where the presentation ceremony will be held.

We have prepared a few remarks on Jose Marti and the tradition of Cuban freedom. You might want to supplement them with parts of the "Statement on Cuba" which you have.

We are advised when you do the Soviet Navy thing in Pensacola that you need not make reference to Cuba in the same way you did in Miami.

001216

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

MIAMI AND PENSACOLA PRESS CONFERENCES

MARCH 3, 1972

001217

Miami - Mar 3 -  
Cuban Day

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WELCOME RELAXATION OF TENSIONS IN  
OUR EVER-SHRINKING WORLD. I JOIN WITH THEM IN WELCOMING THE  
PRESIDENT'S TALKS WITH THE CHINESE AND THE SOVIET LEADERS.

I HAVE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO THE PURSUIT OF PEACE, AND

THE SEARCH FOR DISARMAMENT. BUT WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT A TRULY  
PEACEFUL WORLD IS NOT YET WITH US.

WE MUST NOT RELAX OUR DEDICATION TO THE PURSUIT OF PEACE.  
BUT NEITHER CAN WE RELAX OUR DEDICATION TO THE PURSUIT OF  
AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE. WE MUST SUCCESSFULLY CONTINUE THE SALT  
TALKS, JUST AS WE MUST MAINTAIN A STRONG DEFENSE.

WE MUST NOT LET OUR FUTURE HOPES BLIND US TO OUR CURRENT  
PROBLEMS. AND ONE SUCH PROBLEM WE MUST SEE CLEARLY IS THE  
BUILD-UP OF SOVIET NAVAL OPERATIONS.

THE SOVIET NAVY IS STEPPING UP ITS ACTIVE PRESENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN -- QUIETLY, CONTINUALLY, AND QUICKLY. IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT DURING THE DECADE OF THE 1970'S THE SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN AND OFF U.S. SHORES MAY BE COMPARABLE TO THE PRESENT RUSSIAN ACTIVITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT THE FUTURE SECURITY OF OUR SOUTHERN COASTS AND OUR CARIBBEAN NEIGHBORS IS UNDER SEVERE CHALLENGE.

AND WHAT IS OUR GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE? SECRETARY LAIRD, IN THE ANNUAL DEFENSE DEPARTMENT POSTURE STATEMENT, AND PRESIDENT NIXON, IN HIS "STATE OF THE WORLD" MESSAGE, INADEQUATELY RECOGNIZED THE CURRENT BUILDUP.



ONLY ONE BRIEF LINE IN EACH REPORT VAGUELY MENTIONS THE INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE. THE SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND THE DEFENSE OF OUR NATION DEMAND GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE RUSSIAN BUILD-UP IN THE CARIBBEAN.

WE CAN NO LONGER BE BLIND TO THE GROWING SOVIET PRESENCE NEAR OUR SHORES. THE FACTS MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

*See in Foreign*

1. THE SOVIET CUBAN BASE AT CIENFUEGOS IS BEING UPGRADED IN APPARENT VIOLATION OF THE U.S.-U.S.S.R. UNDERSTANDING OF OCTOBER 1970. THAT UNDERSTANDING PROVIDES THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD NOT STATION NUCLEAR EQUIPPED SHIPS AT THE PORT.



*See en Foyegon*

CIENFUEGOS CAN NOW EASILY BE CONVERTED TO A FORWARD BASE FACILITY FROM AN ANCHORAGE BASE. IT CAN SERVICE POLARIS-TYPE SOVIET "Y" SUBMARINES. THIS MEANS CIENFUEGOS NOW CONTAINS ACCESS TO MATERIAL AND SUPPLY SUPPORT, MOORINGS FOR SUBMARINE TENDERS, AND RADIOACTIVE BARGES FOR TESTING DEACTIVATION OR STANDDOWN OF NUCLEAR PLANTS. IT IS A PERMANENT MODERN LOGISTICS BASE. WHILE CASTRO CONTROLS CUBA IT IS A POTENTIAL DANGER TO OUR SECURITY.

2. A DESERTING CUBAN FIGHTER-BOMBER DISCLOSED THE SERIOUS WEAKNESSES IN THE U.S. WARNING SYSTEM BY FLYING INTO MIAMI WITH LITTLE OR NO DETECTION. A CUBANA AIRLINES PLANE FLEW

INTO NEW ORLEANS UNDETECTED BY OUR RADAR. <sup>OUR</sup> VULNERABILITY IS BECOMING OPEN. IT MUST BE STOPPED.

3. SOVIET NAVAL TASK FORCES AND CUBAN NAVAL UNITS HAVE  
HELD JOINT ANTI-SUBMARINE EXERCISES IN THE GULF OF MEXICO  
ONLY 30 MILES OFF THE U.S. COAST.

*His* WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE CARIBBEAN  
TO OUR SECURITY AND OUR ALLIES' SAFETY.

-- THE PROTECTION OF THE PANAMA CANAL ROUTE IS VITAL --  
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF NEEDED RAW MATERIALS WITHIN THE  
HEMISPHERE AND FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF OUR COMMERCIAL AND  
MILITARY OBLIGATIONS IN THE PACIFIC -- FOR JAPAN AND ALL OF  
ASIA.

-- THE RUSSIANS COULD DEPLOY THEIR SHIPS IN THE CARIBBEAN  
AS A DIVERSIONARY TACTIC TO MAKE US RESPOND BY WEAKENING OUR  
PRESENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE ATLANTIC, AND IN OTHER AREAS.

STRATEGIC DETERRENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN DOES NOT WORK ON THE SAME LEVEL AS IT DOES ELSEWHERE. OUR INTEREST IN THE CARIBBEAN DEMANDS PREDOMINANT STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY AND NOT JUST PARITY.

WE MUST ALSO RECOGNIZE THE DEFINITE POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RISKS THAT THE SOVIET PRESENCE ENTAILS. NOT ONLY CAN IT SERVE TO UNDERMINE THE AMERICAN POSITION, BUT IT CAN SUPPLANT OUR INFLUENCE WITH ITS OWN. OUR SENSE OF SECURITY IN THE CARIBBEAN ALL TOO EASILY COULD BECOME A TENUOUS INSECURITY.

---

*h* | WHAT SHOULD THE AMERICAN RESPONSE BE?

FIRST -- WE MUST CLEARLY RECOGNIZE THE THREAT.

SECOND -- THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SEEK, WHEN HE TRAVELS TO MOSCOW THIS SPRING, AN EXPANSION OF THE OCTOBER, 1970 AGREEMENT TO FURTHER RESTRICT SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE CARIBBEAN. THE RUSSIANS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT WE WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY INCREASED ACTIVITY ON THEIR PART -- JUST AS THEY WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY ON OUR PART IN THE BALTIC OR BARENTS SEAS.

THIRD -- WE MUST IMMEDIATELY INCREASE OUR SURVEILLANCE FACILITIES IN THE CARIBBEAN AND OUR COASTAL WATERS. OUR PRESENT LOW LEVEL OF SURVEILLANCE IS A DIRECT INVITATION TO THE RUSSIAN NAVY.

001224

-8-

FOURTH -- WE MUST UPGRADE THE IMPORTANCE OF LATIN AMERICA  
AND THE CARIBBEAN IN OUR FOREIGN POLICIES. WE MUST REALIZE THAT  
ULTIMATELY OUR SECURITY WILL NOT REST ON STRATEGIC DEPLOYMENTS  
BUT ON THE LONG-TERM FRIENDSHIPS THAT WE ESTABLISH WITH OUR  
NEIGHBORS.

IN THE LONG HORIZON OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S WORLD TRAVELS HE  
HAS LOST SIGHT OF OUR OWN BACK YARD. WE MUST RE-ESTABLISH  
POLICIES THAT CAN BUILD A COMMON COMMUNITY OF INTEREST WITH  
OUR NEIGHBORS TO THE SOUTH.

*This*  
I DO NOT CALL FOR A MILITARISTIC AMERICA. NOR DO I CALL  
FOR A WEAK AMERICA. BUT I DO CALL FOR A GOVERNMENT THAT RECOGNIZES  
THAT WE ARE, THAT WE MUST BE, A MARITIME POWER -- AN ATLANTIC,  
A PACIFIC, AND A CARIBBEAN POWER.

I DO NOT SAY WE MUST RESPOND WITH A MASSIVELY LARGER DEFENSE BUDGET. ON THE CONTRARY, BUT I DO SAY WE MUST HAVE A STRENGTHENED, A MORE RATIONAL DEFENSE POSTURE.

THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF HAS SAID THAT WE SHOULD BARGAIN FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH, BUT HE HAS ASSUMED A POSITION OF WEAKNESS BOTH IN OUR POLICIES AND IN OUR ACTIONS IN THE CARIBBEAN.

AT A TIME WHEN THE SOVIET UNION HAS EXPRESSED A WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS, IT IS SURELY TIME TO NEGOTIATE A LIMITATION ON THEIR ACTIVITIES IN THE CARIBBEAN.

OUR SECURITY MUST BE PROTECTED. MOST OF ALL, IT MUST BE PROTECTED CLOSE TO HOME.



# Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)