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020210 :BC-DEFENCE (FENIUK, SEE PIX)

CUBH PREPARES FOR +PEOPLE'S WAR+ IN CASE OF ATTACK

BY LIONEL MARTIN, REVIEWS

HHYHNN, NOV 2, REVIEW - PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO, WHO ALWAYS DRESSES AS A SOLDIER READY TO FIGHT, HAS TOLD HIS COMMUNIST PARTY THAT ALMOST 80 PER CENT OF THE ISLAND'S 7.1 POPULATION IS ORGANISED FOR WHAT WOULD BE A +WAR OF ALL THE PEOPLE+ IF CUBA WERE INVADDED.

HE RETURNED TO THE THEME IN A RECENT SPEECH SAYING THAT IF +IMPERIALISM+ TRIED TO OCCUPY CUBAN TERRITORY, IT WOULD SUFFER +LIKE AN ELEPHANT AMONG SWARMS OF RED ANTS AND HUNGRY WASPS.+

THE COLOURFUL IMAGE REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A WAR FOR WHICH THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNIST PARTY HAVE BEEN PREPARING OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS.

CASTRO SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE PERCEIVED THREAT OF U.S. AGGRESSION, CUBA +HAS MULTIPLIED ITS DEFENSIVE CAPACITY MANY TIMES OVER NOT ONLY IN REGARD TO THE NUMBER AND QUALITY OF ITS WEAPONS BUT ALSO IN THE PREPARATION OF THE ENTIRE POPULATION -- MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN, OLD PEOPLE AND ADOLESCENTS -- IN THE TASK OF DEFENDING THE COUNTRY.+

ACCORDING TO THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, CUBA HAS OVER 160,000 MEMBERS OF THE REGULAR ARMED FORCES, AN EQUAL NUMBER OR MORE OF ACTIVE RESERVISTS AND AT LEAST 1.2 MILLION MEMBERS OF THE VOLUNTEER PEOPLE'S TERRITORIAL MILITIA.

CASTRO, 60, WHO 30 YEARS AGO WAS LEADING THE GUERRILLA REBELLION WHICH TOPPLED FULGENCIO BATISTA IN 1959, STILL WEARS OLIVE-GREEN MILITARY UNIFORMS.

IN A SPEECH IN SEPTEMBER HE SAID CUBA WAS PREPARED TO RESIST +A TOTAL BLOCKADE, A BLOCKADE PLUS MILITARY HARASSING AND EVEN THE OCCUPATION OF OUR COUNTRY, IN WHICH CASE THE BATTLE WILL NOT CEASE.+

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