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01Aug89 CUBA: ROTTEN FRUIT FALLS AS CASTRO SHAKES THE TREE.

By Lionel Martin

HAVANA, Aug 1, Reuter - With the arrest on Monday of four Fidel Castro has given a clear signal that his campaign against corruption in **Cuba** is far from over.

Some foreign journalists and diplomats concluded when Castro failed to make a single reference to corruption and drug trafficking in a major speech last week that he had decided to sweep the corruption problem under the rug.

After a drug trafficking scandal that resulted in the trial and execution on July 14 of four high military officials, including Hero of the Revolution General Arnaldo **Ochoa** of the Cuban Armed Forces, these observers had predicted Castro would avoid further comment. "It has just been too embarrassing for him and he has decided to close the door on the ugly episode," a visiting journalist said in Havana the day after the speech on July 26.

But on Monday the official newspaper Granma reported that former interior minister General Jose Abrantes and three of his aides had been arrested. It also announced the arrest of a civilian head of a business enterprise and the demotion to colonel and forced retirement of five Interior Ministry generals.

"The campaign against corruption is going to continue. Fidel is going to shake the tree until all the rotten fruit falls to the ground," one Cuban Communist party official said.

The scandal over corruption had begun nearly seven weeks earlier on June 12 with the arrest of army and intelligence officers for corruption and drug trafficking.

Abrantes was dismissed on June 28 as interior minister and a general shake-up began in the ministry.

Ten others, including General Patricio de la Guardia of the Interior Ministry, were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 15 to 30 years.

Two days before Castro's speech, former transport minister Diocles Torralbas was convicted on corruption charges and sentenced to 20 years in jail.

The official Cuban position on the campaign against corruption was spelled out by General Raul Castro, the armed forces minister. "A continual and systematic national prophylaxis has begun," he told the Council of State on July 8 at its meeting that confirmed the death sentences against the four officers.

He said the campaign would be carried out "without extremism...in a way that will not encourage rumour-mongering."

With his brother looking on approvingly, Raul Castro said the campaign would begin at the highest levels of the government and party and would extend down to the grassroots.

The following day, Fidel Castro himself said that "embezzlement, robbery, indiscipline, impunity and crooked business practices" must be rooted out.

He said he was convinced that the Communist party would be capable of "sweeping away all that which smells of corruption."

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