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POL-CASTRO

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CASTRO ON IRAN SCANDAL QUOTES +INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY+
HAVANA, DEC 5, REUTER -- IN A SHORT, EXTEMPORANEOUS COMMENT
ON THE IRANIAN ARMS SCANDAL AND PRESIDENT REAGAN LAST NIGHT,
CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO QUOTED A TEXAS LEGISLATOR AS
SAYING: +ONE IS INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY.+

CASTRO MADE HIS COMMENTS, STILL UNPUBLISHED HERE, TO A GROUP
OF LATIN AMERICAN MOVIE-MAKERS AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE
FOUNDATION FOR NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA WHICH IS HEADED BY THE
NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE WINNER, THE COLOMBIAN NOVELIST,
GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ.

CASTRO, SURROUNDED BY THE LATIN AMERICAN VISITORS WHO BOMBARDED
HIM WITH QUESTIONS, SAID IT IS APPARANT THAT SUPPORTERS OF MR.
REAGAN ARE TRYING TO CREATE +A SMOKE SCREEN+ TO PROTECT THE
PRESIDENT FROM THE CHARGE THAT HE KNEW OF THE IRAN ARMS DEAL AND
THE TRANSFER OF ARMS TO THE NICARAGUAN CONTRAS.

THE CUBAN PRESIDENT SAID THAT BECUASE OF THE CRISIS, THERE
WAS THE RISK THAT THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION MIGHT RESORT TO
INCREASED BELLIGERANCY IN CENTRAL AMERICAN TO DIVERT PUBLIC
ATTENTION BUT HE ADDED, +THAT WOULD GO AGAINST ALL GOOD SENSE.+

IT IS THEN THAT CASTRO QUOTED THE U.S. LEGISLATOR: +ONE IS
INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY.+

UNTIL NOW THE CUBAN PRESIDENT HAS NOT SPOKEN AMPLY ABOUT
THE SCANDAL IN WASHINGTON. IN A TWO AND A HALF HOUR MEETING WITH
PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM WESTERN EUROPE ON NOVEMBER 27, HE LIMITED
HIMSELF TO SAYING THAT HE WAS ASTONISHED TO HEAR THAT PRESIDENT
REAGAN CLAIMS NOT TO HAVE KNOWN ANYTHING ABOUT THE ARMS'
TRANSACTIONS. .

HE ALSO TOLD THE PARLIAMENTARIANS THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT
THE UNITED STATES HAD PLANS TO STOP UP ITS AGRESSIONS AGAINST
NICARAGUA INORDER TO OVERSHADOW THE IRANIAN ARMS DEAL SCANDAL
BUT, HE SAID, U.S. PUBLIC OPINION MIGHT FORCE IT TO CHANGE
ITS PLANS.

--REUTER/LEN

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