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ECO:REFINERY

1986.

(PHOTO WILL FOLLOW)

RR-86-98

OIL REFINERY BEING BUILT WITH SOVIET HELP IN CONSTRUCTION STAGE:  
CIENFUEGOS, CUBA, SEPT 14, REUTER --CUBA'S THIRD MAJOR OIL  
REFINERY WHICH IS BEING BUILT 15 KILOMETERS FROM THIS CARIBBEAN  
PORT CITY ON THE BAY OF CIENFUEGOS SHOULD BEGIN FIRST STAGE  
PRODUCTION IN 1988, PEDRO DIAZ, CHIEF OF ENGINEERING OPERATIONS ON  
THE CONSTRUCTION SITE TOLD VISITING JOURNALISTS.

THE REFINERY'S FIRST STAGE WILL PROCESS THREE MILLION OF CRUDE  
ANNUALLY. THE SECOND STAGE, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BE OPERATIONAL  
BY 1992 WILL PROCESS AN ADDITIONAL THREE MILLION TONNES A YEAR  
THE REFINERY WILL PRODUCE GASOLINE, AVIATION FUEL, NAPHTHA, LIQUID  
GAS AND KEROSENE.

THE ORIGINAL PROJECTIONS CALLED FOR AN EXPENDITURE OF 400 MILLION  
DOLLARS ON THE FIRST STAGE BUT RISING LABOR COSTS AND THE ACQUISITION  
OF SPARE PARTS HAS UPPED EXPECTED COSTS TO 490 MILLION. THE OVERALL  
PROJECT, WHEN COMPLETED WILL BE APPROXIMATELY ONE BILLION DOLLARS.  
F THE REFINERY, WHICH IS SPREAD OVER AN AREA OF 320 HECTARES,  
IS BEING BUILT WITH SOVIET AID WITH NINETY EIGHT PERCENT OF THE  
EQUIPMENT COMING FROM THE SOVIET UNION, DIAZ SAID.

THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT OF INTENTION WAS SIGNED IN 1977 BY  
SOVIET AND CUBAN OFFICIALS BUT IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1981 THAT CONSTRUCTION  
GOT UNDERWAY AND ONLY IN 1983 WHEN ACCELERATED  
CONSTRUCTION+ BEGAN, THE CUBAN ENGINEER SAID.

==MORE/LEM

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WHEN COMPLETED, THE REFINERY WILL EMPLOY 200 ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS AND 1600 WORKERS, SOME OF WHOM ARE RECEIVING PRACTICAL TRAINING COURSES AT REFINERIES NEAR BAKU IN THE SOVIET UNION AND PLOESTI IN RUMANIA AS WELL AS IN CUBA'S OTHER TWO REFINERIES.

DIAZ SAID THAT 15 PERCENT OF THE COST WILL BE SPENT TO ENSURE THAT THE REFINERY DOES NOT POLLUTE THE BAY OF CIENFUEGOS WHICH IS RENOWNED FOR ITS COMMERCIAL SHRIMP FISHING. GASES WILL BE PROCESSED TO REMOVE THE SULFURIC CONTENT BUT THE REMAINDER OF THE EXHAUST WILL BE EXPELLED THROUGH A 180 METER SMOKE STACK. HE SAID THAT PREVAILING WINDS WOULD CARRY THE EMISSIONS AWAY FROM THE CITY OF CIENFUEGOS 15 KM AWAY TOWARD FOREST AREAS AND DENIED THAT THE AIR WOULD BE POLLUTED.

THE CIENFUEGOS BAY REGION IS BECOMING A MAJOR CUBAN INDUSTRIAL CENTER, DIAZ SAID, WITH A THERMO-ELECTRIC POWER STATION ALREADY IN OPERATION AND CUBA'S FIRST NUCLEAR POWER PLANT UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

DURING FIRST STAGE OPERATIONS THE REINERY WILL BE SUPPLIED BY SOVIET CRUDE OIL WHICH WILL BE DISCHARGED INTO PIPELINES NEAR THE REFINERY. BEGINNING IN THE SECOND STAGE, THE FACILITY WILL BE SUPPLIED THROUGH AN OIL PIPE LINE FROM THE SUPER-TANKER PORT WHICH IS BEING BUILT ON CUBA'S NORTH COAST.

--REUTER/LEM