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1988

UU ISA LEN BAS FBA CAW
AM-CUBA-CASTRO/SPORTS
CASTRO SAYS CUBA WILL ONLY GO TO OLYMPICS IF SHARED EQUITABLY

HAVANA, MARCH 17, REUTER - CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO REITERATED HIS NATION'S DECISION TO STAY FROM THE 1988 SUMMER OLYMPICS IN SOUTH KOREA BUT LEFT THE DOOR OPEN BY SAYING IT WOULD GO IF THE GAMES ARE SHARED EQUITABLY WITH NORTH KOREA, GRANMA REPORTED THURSDAY.

THE CUBAN LEADER MADE HIS REMARKS ~~TUESDAY~~ WEDNESDAY NIGHT DURING A CEREMONY IN WHICH HE HANDED OLYMPIC BATONS AWARDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE TO SIXTY FIVE CUBAN ATHLETES THAT HAD WON MEDALS IN PAST OLYMPICS.

AMONG THOSE WHO RECEIVED THE OLYMPIC BATON WERE TEOFILO STEVENSON, THREE-TIME OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL HEAVYWEIGHT BOXER (1972, 1976, 1980) AND ALBERTO JUANTORENA WHO WON BOTH THE 400 AND 800 METER RUNNING EVENTS IN THE ONTREAL OLYMPICS OF 1976.

THE SIXTY ONE YEAR OLD CUBAN PRESIDENT SAID +WE ARE FIGHTING TO PARTICIPATE HONOURABLY IN THE OLHMPICS. WE ARE FIGHTING TO GO TO KOREA IN A DIGNIFIED MANNER, WITH OUR HEAD HELD HIGH + (CON EL FRENTE EN ALTO) HE MADE IT CLEAR HOWEVER THAT CUBA WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IF NORTH KOREA BOYCOTTS THE GAMES.

CASTRO PRAISED THE CUBAN ATHLETES FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOT TO ATTEND THE SEOUL GAMES AND SUGGEST THAT EACH OF THE ATHLETES THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FOR THIS YEAR'S OLYMPICS BE GIVEN A +GOLD MEDAL OF HONOR.+ HE SAID THAT A MAN'S AND WOMEN'S HONOUR IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN GOING TO THE OLYMMPICS.

==REUTER/LEM 1432
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