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:CUBA-CASTRO
FIDEL CASTRO GIVES MEDAL TO DIPLOMAT INVOLVED IN LONDON SHOOTOUT:
HAVANA, OCT 15, REUTER - PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO PRESENTED A MEDAL TO AND THEN EMBRACED THE CUBAN DIPLOMAT, CARLOS MEDINA, WHO WAS EXPELLED FROM GREAT BRITAIN IN SEPTEMBER AFTER HE SHOT AT A FORMER CUBAN INTELLIGENCE AGENT, THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER, GRANMA, REPORTED SATURDAY.
THE PRESENTATION CERENONY TOOK PLACE FRIDAY AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE WHICH AWARDED THE MEDAL.
A WRITTEN COMMENDATION WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE MEDAL SAID THAT MEDINA HAD GIVEN +THE ONLY POSSIBLE ANSWER... TO THE MISERABLE TRAITOR.+
THE +TRAITOR+ REFERS TO FLORENTINO AZPILLAGA, A VETERAN OFFICER OF CUBAN INTELLIGENCE WHO DEFECTED TO THE WEST FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN JUNE 1987 AND WENT TO THE UNITED STATES.
MEDINA STATED IN SEPTEMBER THAT AZPILLAGU TRIED +TO INDUCE OR FORCE+ HIM TO DEFECT.
THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT ALLEGES THAT AZPILLAGA WORKS FOR THE CIA AND THAT AT THE TIME OF THE SHOOTING IN LONDON HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY BOTH CIA AND BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AGENTS.
THE COMMENDATION CALLED MEDINA'S ACTION +COURAGEOUS+ AND SAID THAT +HE RISKED HIS OWN LIFE AS A NOBLE EXPONENT OF THE YOUNG GENERATION FORGED IN THE PUREST IDEAS OF THE REVOLUTION.+
MEDINA SAID SHORTLY AFTER THE SHOOTING THAT HE HAD DEFINITELY WOUNDED AZPILLAGA BUT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE INCIDENT WHICH ALSO LED TO THE EXPULSION OF THE CUBAN AMBASSADOR, OSCAR FERNANDEZ MELL.
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