

OCT 12 1962

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Castro Nod Is Awaited By Donovan

Lawyer Asserts
He Is Optimistic
On Ransom Offer

By Joe McGowan Jr.
MIAMI, Fla., Oct. 11 (AP)

Lawyer James B. Donovan today said he had returned to Miami to await Fidel Castro's decision on whether he will accept an offer of medicine, drugs, and baby foods for the release of the 1113 Bay of Pigs invasion prisoners.

"I am always optimistic," the New Yorker said when asked whether he thought Castro would liberate the prisoners.

Donovan said his offer consisted solely of "medicine, drugs, medical supplies and

New phase in Administration policy toward Cuba coming into focus.

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infant foods, designed as an offer of the American people to the Cuban people."

"No money is involved," Donovan emphasized.

Before I entered the picture, the Cuban Families Committee had undertaken certain obligations. My work does not involve any of these (obligations) or infringe upon them.

To Stay for Day or So

Donovan said his intention now was "simply to wait for a final resolution by the Cuban government."

He said he expected to stay in the Miami area for the next day or so. He said he had a bursitis condition and would receive medical attention while here.

Donovan was asked whether the infant food he mentioned meant that food was being shipped to Cuba. He replied: "This is not what I would be described as food."

Donovan said the Cuban Families Committee had spent the past nine months gathering funds to buy the freedom of at least some of the prisoners.

He said the Committee can accept cash and other gifts under Federal tax-deductible provisions.

"There are large corporations in this country and a number of wealthy Cubans who have contributed to this campaign," Donovan said.

"It turns out there are many corporations and foundations in Europe and South America that have entered this campaign and have shown a humanitarian interest."

"We have also been aided by Ed Sullivan and others in the entertainment world."

"Funds collected from all these sources have all been pouring in and have been pulled together in Miami."

"The U. S. Government has absolutely no part in these negotiations."

Donovan repeatedly declined to go into details concerning points holding up an agreement.

But he said he felt that accord was near.

At one point, when Donovan was asked what was causing the snag with Castro, he replied:

"I really think he should explain that. I wouldn't attempt to give his position."

Donovan said he did not see Castro today, but met with one of the highest Cuban Ministers just before leaving.

The negotiator said he had no plans to talk with President Kennedy or other high Government officials while here.

Donovan was asked whether he could state with assurance that an agreement eventually

would be achieved and the specific details, and that prisoners released.

"I can't say definitely that the prisoners will be liberated," he responded. "It would be foolish on my part. It would raise false hopes. It totally depends on Castro and his government."

Another inquiry was whether incidents, such as a reported raid on a Cuban fishing village Monday by a seaborne group of Cuban exiles, affected the progress of negotiations.

Donovan said he had heard nothing of such a raid until he saw a story about it in a newspaper on the homeward bound. But he said any kind of incident tended to increase tensions.

In response to questions, he said Castro asked no concessions of the U. S. Government.

During his negotiations, he said, he has met with Castro personally for a half-dozen sessions lasting three to five hours.

All he would say about the exact situation at the moment was that "some new questions have been raised" concerning

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