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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum

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THE CRISIS
USSR/CUBA

Information as of 0600

27 October 1962

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27 October 1962

SC No. 08184/62

SUMMARY CONTENTS

I. Based on the latest low-level reconnaissance mission, three of the four MRBM sites at San Cristobal and the two sites at Sagua La Grande appear to be fully operational. No further sites or missiles have been identified.

The mobilization of Cuban military forces continues at a high rate. However, they remain under orders not to take any hostile action unless attacked.

Steps toward establishing an integrated air defense system are under way. On the diplomatic front, Cuban representatives are trying to plant the idea that Havana would be receptive to UN mediation. They indicate, however, that a prerequisite must be "proof" that the US does not intend to attack Cuba.

II. Despite Khrushchev's declaration to U Thant that Soviet ships would temporarily avoid the quarantine area, we have no information as yet that the six Soviet and three satellite ships en route have changed course. A Swedish vessel, believed to be under charter to the USSR, refused to stop yesterday when intercepted by a US destroyer and was allowed to continue to Havana.

III. No significant redeployment of Soviet ground, air or naval forces have been noted. However, there are continuing indications of increased readiness among some units. Three F-class submarines have been identified on the surface inside or near the quarantine line.

IV. There has been no distinct shift in the pattern of reaction. In Western Europe, further support for the US has come from several quarters and unfavorable reactions are decidedly in the minority.

Official London seems intent on checking premature optimism which is showing up in widely scattered parts of the world, particularly among the neutrals. French support for the US is hardening.


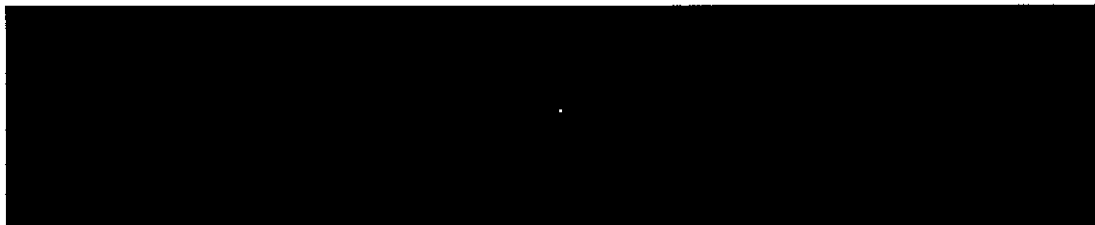
There are reports that anti-US demonstrations have broken out in several Latin American capitals, including Buenos Aires, Caracas, and La Paz.

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I. THE SITUATION IN CUBA

Cuban efforts to increase military preparedness continue. 


Detailed analysis of 25 October low-altitude photography confirms the rapid pace of construction of the MRBM and IRBM sites.

San Cristobal MRBM Sites 1, 2, and 3 Sagua La Grande Sites 1 and 2 are considered fully operational. The remaining MRBM site, #4 at San Cristobal will probably be fully operational on 28 October.

Guanajay IRBM Site 1 will probably be fully operational on 1 December, while Guanajay IRBM Site 2 and Remedios IRBM Site 1 will probably achieve full operational capability on 15 December. Road construction activity in the Remedios area suggests the location of the expected second IRBM site there.


The three Soviet ships suspected of being ballistic missile carriers continue moving toward the USSR.

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Low-level photography has provided the first evidence of a launcher for unguided rockets in Cuba. This launcher, noted near Remedios, is probably for a rocket having a range of about 50,000 yards.

[REDACTED]

The Cuban government is exploiting the arrival of a Soviet tanker in Havana on 26 October to put on a propaganda display designed to demonstrate the "failure of the US blockade."

[REDACTED] reporting from Havana on Castro's 23 October speech, commented that Castro seemed tired and uncertain at the beginning of the speech and his audience of government and party leaders looked serious and even glum. He and they warmed up, however, to the strains of his familiar revolutionary slogans and rhetoric. [REDACTED] commented that "Castro reiterated his readiness to die with his people, but seems rather less concerned about whether they or anyone else remains alive."

The Cuban government is apparently making some attempt to appear conciliatory on the international scene, though Cuban spokesmen continue adamant in their refusal to consider any inspection of Cuban bases by any outsiders.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Cuban Ambassador in Canada told a press conference that Cuba cannot trust the United States until it has "proof" that the US will not attack Cuba. When asked what would constitute proof, he suggested a US guarantee to the UN not to attack Cuba, the lifting of the "blockade," and the removal of Cuban exiles from Florida.

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Foreign Minister Roa flatly denied to [REDACTED] that there are "any offensive weapons in Cuba." He was told in this meeting with Roa that Cuba would be willing "even to dissolve its army" if it could obtain "effective guarantees for its integrity and sovereignty."

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II. SOVIET SHIPPING TO CUBA

Despite the declaration by Khrushchev to U Thant that Soviet ships would avoid temporarily the US quarantine area, there is no information to indicate that any of the six Soviet ships en route to Cuba have turned back. The three satellite ships have also continued their course to Cuba.

The latest position reports available for the two Soviet dry cargo ships are for about noon on 26 October. The Belovodsk at that time was still in the North Atlantic proceeding to Cuba. She carries a mixed load of non-military cargoes and 12 helicopters. The E. Pugachev, carrying commercial cargoes, is still off the Mexican coast, and apparently proceeding toward the Panama Canal.

The latest available position reports for the four Soviet tankers show that they are still progressing toward Cuba. The Grozny should reach the quarantine zone today. It [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Nicaro. At Nicaro it will undoubtedly discharge the 500 tons of ammonia that it is carrying in deck tanks. This ammonia will be used by the nickel refinery at Nicaro.

The 16 Soviet dry cargo ships that were carrying military cargoes to Cuba and headed back toward the USSR have continued to maintain their easterly course.

On 26 October the Swedish vessel Coolangotta was intercepted by a US destroyer. The Coolangotta refused to respond or to stop and was allowed to proceed to Havana. The Coolangotta, reportedly under charter to the USSR, departed from Leningrad on 9 October.

The East German passenger ship Voelkerfreundschaft and the Polish freighter Bialystok passed into the quarantine area about 25 October and should arrive in Havana today or tomorrow. The Kladno, a Czechoslovak ship is still en route to Cuba and is expected to arrive in Havana on 31 October. Both of the satellite cargo ships are estimated to be carrying ordinary commercial cargoes.

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III. THE SITUATION IN THE BLOC

A. MILITARY

We have noted the following Soviet military developments; an assessment of their significance will be issued later this morning by the USIB Watch Committee.



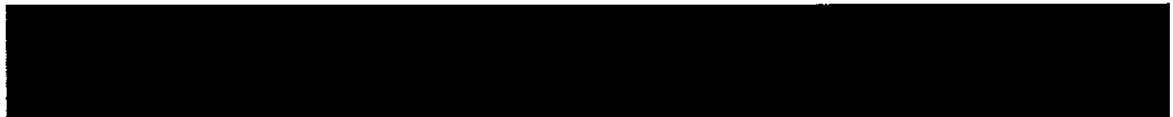
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An F-class submarine (conventional-powered attack type) was photographed well inside the quarantine line. In addition, two other F-class submarines have been identified just outside the line.



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Khrushchev's instructions to Soviet ships bound for Cuba to avoid temporarily the interception zone established by the US Navy, announced in response to U Thant's 25 October appeal, is intended to make a show of Soviet reasonableness and peaceful intentions and to play for time.

Khrushchev's 24 October remarks to US businessman William Knox were also calculated to draw the US into talks on Cuba. He indicated that a personal meeting with the President was preferable to a UN appearance for the purpose of negotiating a Cuban settlement. He suggested a meeting in Moscow or Washington, or a rendezvous at sea.

To point up the fruitfulness of negotiations, Khrushchev remarked that he was "very pleased" with the progress of the Gromyko-Rusk talks on Berlin prior to 22 October. Consistent with current Soviet practice, he made no threats of retaliation in Berlin for US actions with respect to Cuba.

In his conversation with Mr. Knox, however, Khrushchev adhered to the line that President Kennedy was pursuing a piratical policy. Obviously expecting his remarks would be passed to Western leaders, Khrushchev said that the US can stop Soviet ships once, twice, or maybe three times, but somewhere along the line he would give orders to sink a US blockader. He added that he might stop some US ships elsewhere.

Khrushchev noted that "we have anti-aircraft missiles and we have ballistic missiles with both nuclear and high explosive warheads already" in Cuba. In an effort to reassure the West, he stressed they were under strict Soviet control and would so remain. He avowed that he would never fire these missiles except in defense of Cuba or the Soviet Union. He also stated that he would not be the first to fire a nuclear weapon.

Soviet UN delegate Zorin reportedly told a group of neutral African and Asian UN delegates that "the Americans are thoroughly mistaken if they think we shall fall into their trap. We shall undertake nothing in Berlin, for action against Berlin is just what the Americans would wish." Zorin went on to say that the USSR will do everything to preserve peace.

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The Soviet press on 26 October continued to give heavy coverage to Cuba but with somewhat more emphasis than in the previous two days on the necessity for preventing war and somewhat less on the alleged wave of indignation sweeping the world. Soviet broadcasts contrast the allegedly aggressive, hysterical US attitudes with peaceful Soviet moves showing a "sincere desire to ease international tension."

East European propaganda media maintain a heavy flow of comment denouncing the US quarantine action, but emphasis appears to be turning from unrelieved denunciation of the United States to praise for the Soviet Union's "calm" and "peaceful" response to the US move. There is also an effort to offset any notion that Soviet "calmness" may be a sign of weakness. The Hungarian daily Nepszabadsag asserts, for example, that "awareness of tremendous strength is the explanation of the calmness that emanates from the Soviet statement."

Reporting remains fragmentary on popular reaction in the East European satellites. Reports of panic buying have been received from Warsaw and Prague, but apparently on a lesser scale than occurred last year during the Berlin crisis. No demonstrations against the US have been reported for 26 October. There was a demonstration in East Germany on 25 October, as well as a mass "hands-off Cuba" demonstration in East Berlin on the same day.

The Yugoslav government view of the Cuban situation, as expressed in the press and private conversations with a US Embassy officer and others, has swung considerably in an anti-American direction during the last 48 hours.

Peiping continues to devote extensive propaganda to Cuba but restricts itself largely to reportage of worldwide protests against US measures and broadcasts little original comment. The Chinese previously endorsed the Soviet government statement but indicated their preference for a firm bloc posture on the crisis.

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2. October 1962

I. NON-BLOC REACTION

Reaction to yesterday's follow-up statement by the US has been slow to come up. Before this there was a tendency in some countries to see an easing of the urgency of the situation. The non-aligned countries seem to be focusing on finding a "face-saving device" for the USSR. Asian allies of the United States have expressed varying degrees of support, but not all of them have done so publicly. Asian neutrals have been reluctant to take a stand. The Africans, apprehensive and baffled, remain unpredictable. Two CENTO nations--Iran and Pakistan--have been slow to come out with solid public support of the United States action.

Opinion in Western Europe is divided on whether there has been an easing of the crisis. Hopefulness, mixed with lingering concern, is expressed in the Italian press. West German commentators consider that the immediate tension has declined, and there is an air of relief in West Berlin where scare-buying has fallen off. However, top government sources in Britain, according to the press, take exception to overly rosy views.

When Soviet chargé Loginov in London told Foreign Secretary Home on 25 October that Moscow hoped Britain would help avert developments in Cuba, Home took an "extremely tough" line, repeating several times that nothing could be done until after the removal of the Soviet weapons. A Daily Mail poll shows that 66% of Britons thought the US should be supported, 30% disagreed. The deputy leader of the British Labor party, George Brown, urges that the US under no circumstances consider dickering with Moscow on Turkish bases.

Analyzing Soviet motives in the Cuban situation. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that, to be able to bring things to a head in Berlin before the end of the year, Khrushchev had quickly to rectify the imbalance in strategic striking power. By moving in an atmosphere of peaceful East-West relations, he hoped to establish a base inside the US warning network and present the US with a fait accompli. He undoubtedly expects some vigorous response from Washington, [REDACTED] but he felt the sites were worth the risk.

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Further support for the US has come from several quarters. In Spain, an emergency cabinet meeting called by France expressed its "complete solidarity." Italian Foreign Minister Piccioni told Ambassador Reinhardt on 26 October that Premier Fanfani had understated the degree of Italy's support for domestic political reasons.

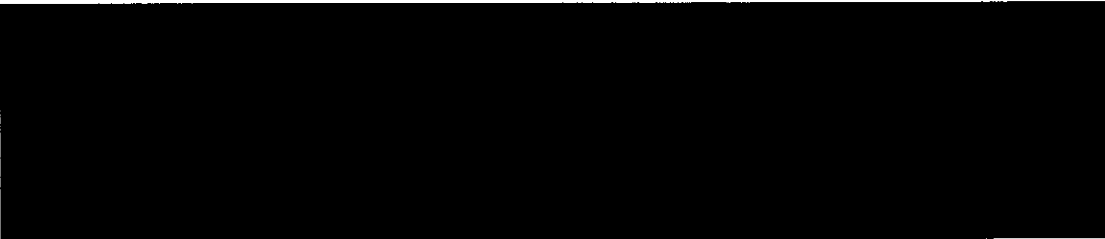
The French Foreign Ministry at all levels continues to show solidarity and support of the US. Officials are aware of the possibility that the US may eventually have to use force against the Cuban bases; they have voiced no objection. The French press shows an increasing understanding of the US position.

Austrian Foreign Minister Kreisky, who appears to endorse US views on Cuba but is concerned about Soviet "face," is publicly promoting the idea of an East-West deal to withdraw Soviet missiles in Cuba in exchange for the withdrawal of US missiles in Turkey and Italy. This idea has not been echoed in Italy, however, even by organs of the extreme left.

United Press reports eruption of violent rioting and terror bombing in more than half dozen Latin American capitals. It states that La Paz, Bolivia, was the scene of street fighting near the United States Embassy involving some 3,000 anti-American labor union members, pro-American demonstrators, and police reports five killed and twenty-six injured.

The wire service also reports that Buenos Aires and Caracas have been hit by demonstrations.

The Venezuelan Defense Ministry has requested riot control equipment and ammunition for all services against the contingency of an all-out Communist effort. Embassy Caracas considers this request to be of the utmost urgency.


Evidence of the firmness of Argentine support for the US position continues to accumulate. The Argentine Army is considering making available two infantry battalions. If Argentina should carry through on this

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regard it would be the first time Argentine troops have served outside the national territory since the end of the Paraguayan War in 1870.

The Bolivian Chamber of Deputies passed two anti-US resolutions on October 25. One demanded that Bolivia adhere to principles of non-intervention and self-determination. The other condemned "repressive" US measures against Cuba without OAS consultation and reiterated non-intervention and self-determination themes. This action reinforces previous indications that the anti-US extreme left now dominates the official party.

Although Premier Adoula has assured Ambassador Gullion of the Congo's support, Adoula told the Egyptian ambassador on 25 October that he supported the neutrals in their proposal for mediation of the crisis. He added that the United States quarantine was "an unlawful act which was pushing toward a world war." Elsewhere in Africa, Nkrumah has confined himself to registering concern. Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika asserts that no matter what the Africans say, most of them think President Kennedy was right.

Nasir believes that Khrushchev has lost a great deal of prestige, according to a usually reliable source. Egyptian press "opinions"--which advocate a neutral Cuba free of foreign bases, the lifting of the quarantine, and a UN prohibition of nuclear weapons exports to non-nuclear nations--reportedly were dictated by Nasir himself.

The Philippine defense minister, with President Macapagal's permission, reportedly will request the Philippine senate to invite the United States to set up missile bases in the islands.

Trinidad has assured American representatives that they will not grant overflight and landing privileges to Havana-bound Soviet aircraft. Although Senegal has given similar assurances, a TU-114 is still scheduled to transit Dakar on 31 October on its way to Havana.

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