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INTELLIGENCE APPRAISAL

CUBA

NAVAL MODERNIZATION(U)

27 MARCH 1979

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**Intelligence
Appraisal**



Cuban Ensign flown on the FOXTROT while transiting Baltic Sea

PREPARED BY



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Chronology of Naval Combatant Deliveries to Cuba

1979* - 2 TURYA PTH, 1 FOXTROT SS
1978 - 2 OSA II PTG
1977 - 1 OSA II PTG
1976 - 2 OSA II PTG
1975 - None
1974 - 1 OSA I PTG
1973 - 2 OSA I PTG
1972 - 2 OSA I PTG
1971 - None
1970 - None
1969 - None
1968 - None
1967 - 6 SO-1 PCS
1966 - 6 KOMAR PTG
1965 - None
1964 - 3 SO-1 PCS, 6 P-4 PTL
1963 - 3 SO-1 PCS, 2 P-4 PTL
1962 - 6 KRONSHADT PCS, 12 KOMAR PTG, 12 P-6 PTL, 4 P-4 PTL, and
1 PO-2 PB

*As of 1 Mar 79

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SECRET**CUBA: NAVAL MODERNIZATION (U)****Summary**

(C) The recent arrival of a FOXTROT-class diesel-powered torpedo attack submarine and two TURYA-class hydrofoil patrol boats may mark the start of a new program to upgrade the Cuban Navy. The navy is the smallest and least equipped of Cuba's armed forces. Since the late 1960s, the army and air force have received most of the deliveries of newer Soviet weapons systems. In recent years, this preferential treatment was given in order to reward and train members of both of these services for operations in Angola and Ethiopia. The navy has had almost no role in Cuban activities in Africa. Its largest vessels are submarine chasers, which are primarily used in coastal defense, with operations and patrols restricted to neighboring waters.

Discussion

(S/WNINTEL/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT) In the early 1960s, the Cuban Navy began a major expansion of its inventory and received newer Soviet weapons on a relatively equal basis with the army and the air force. The influx of new equipment for the navy was so great that between 1962 and 1965 Soviet personnel had to man a large number of the navy's seagoing billets. Of the 69 patrol craft in the current inventory, the only ships delivered since 1967 have been 10 OSA-class missile attack boats and the two TURYA-class hydrofoil patrol boats (PTH); consequently, Cuba's submarine chasers and torpedo boats are showing signs of age. Most of the subchasers and torpedo boats were manufactured in the 1940s and 1950s, and 10 have had to be retired. Many of the remaining 32 have operational deficiencies that require extended repair periods and may have to be retired in the next few years.

(S) Cuba may have received its first submarine, a FOXTROT-class diesel-powered torpedo attack boat, on 6 Feb 79. The FOXTROT would give the Cubans their first true oceangoing capability. There had been rumors that such a delivery was pending and that Cubans were in the USSR to train for submarine duty. The FOXTROT may have been delivered to satisfy Castro's desire to receive the same equipment that had been sent to some of Moscow's other arms purchasers.

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(S) The FOXTROT-class submarine was first launched in 1958. This class has 10 torpedo tubes and carries either 22 torpedoes or 44 mines. It has a maximum speed of 18.7 knots surfaced and 16.7 knots submerged. With a maximum cruising radius of 3,600 nm and a patrol endurance of 60 days, the Cubans can conduct operations well beyond the neighboring waters to which they had formerly been restricted. Additionally, a FOXTROT submarine is an ideal vehicle for the clandestine movement of men and equipment. The Cubans can also conduct live antisubmarine warfare (ASW) exercises without having to depend upon visiting Soviet submarines.

(S) On 6 February, an OMSK-class Soviet merchant ship delivered two TURYA-class PTHs to Havana. The two PTHs, recently constructed at Ullis Shipyard, Vladivostok, apparently have no capability for antisubmarine warfare. The normal dipping sonar installation on the starboard has been omitted as has the after 5.4 meters of superstructure, which is believed to contain sonar control spaces noted on earlier TURYA units. Two communications antennas associated with sonobuoy reception were also not present on the PTHs. Without ASW sensors or ASW communications systems, the units are probably intended to carry only antiship torpedoes.

(S) The first TURYA-class ship was launched in 1972. It is armed with four torpedo tubes, each carrying one torpedo; a twin 57-mm dual-purpose gun; and a twin 25-mm anti-aircraft gun. It has a sustained top speed of 35 knots and an operating radius of 750 nm at 14 knots. These ships may be the forerunners of future arrivals, which would permit the retirement or assignment to reserve status of some of the older vessels. Cuba is the first foreign country to receive the TURYAs.

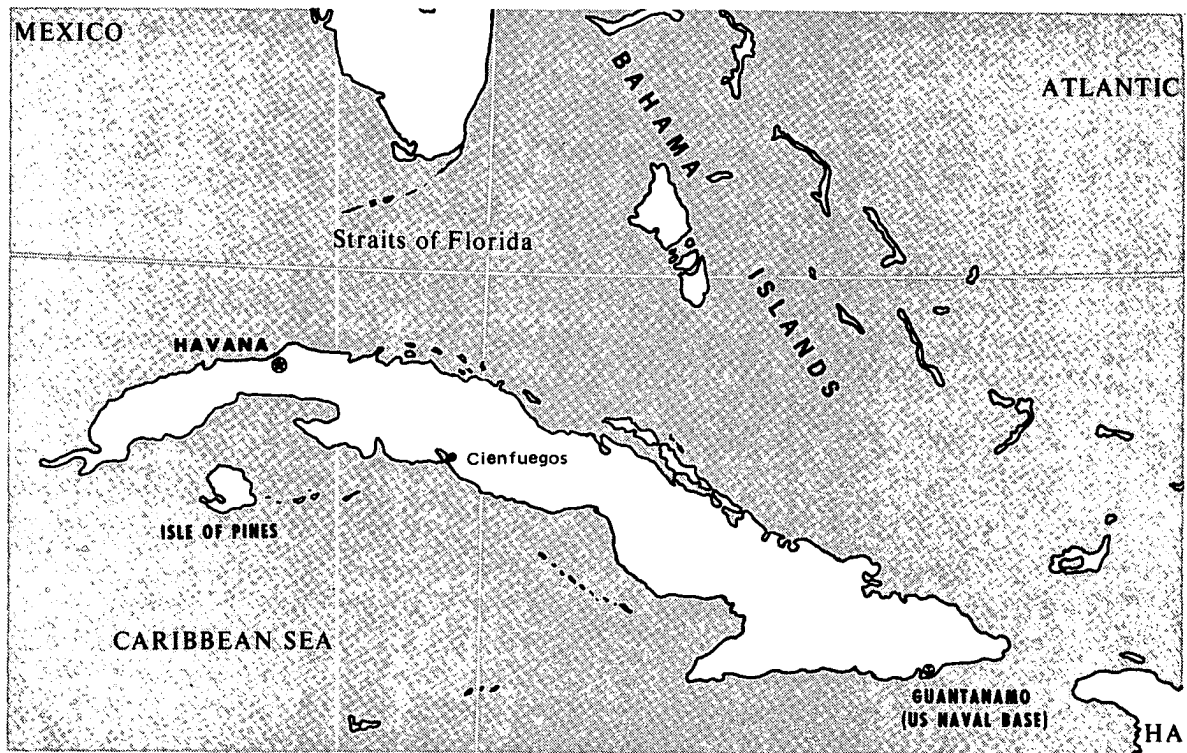
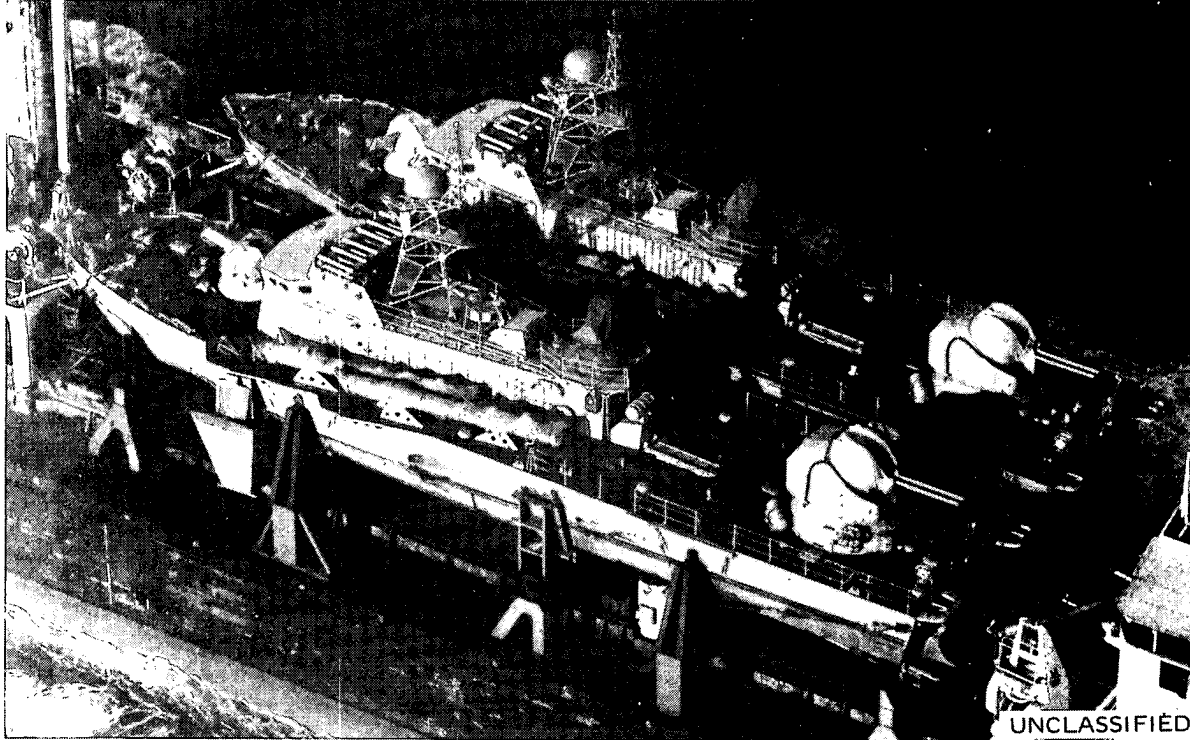
(C) To accommodate the deliveries of additional ships, the navy has been upgrading certain elements of its training program. Enrollment of midshipmen at the Naval Academy at Mariel has doubled since 1975 to a current attendance of 800 to 1,000. Before the curriculum was extensively restructured in 1977, all students attended a traditional four-year course. Students can now major in engineering, line-officer training, or electronics, and respectively attend five, four, and two-year courses of study. In addition, the government has announced the establishment of the navy's first school to be located in Cienfuegos. It will provide secondary-level preparatory training for prospective naval personnel.

(S) The arrival of the FOXTROT and the TURYA may signify a new effort to place greater emphasis on upgrading the Cuban Navy. During the 1970s, the army and air force received a number of new Soviet weapons systems. These included T-62 tanks, ZSU-23-4 self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, BMP-A amphibious armored personnel carriers, MIG-23/FLOGGER all-weather

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SOVIETS DELIVER TURYA-CLASS HYDROFOIL PATROL BOATS TO CUBA



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fighters, MIG-21/FISHBED L all-weather interceptors, MIG-21/FISHBED H all-weather reconnaissance fighters, and MI-8/HIP F assault helicopters. During recent years, however, only the navy's missile attack boats have been upgraded. It is believed that some of the equipment received by the army and air force was in preparation for and recognition of operations in Africa. It is possible that the modernization program for the army and air force is now being extended to the navy as well.

Outlook

(S/WNINTEL/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT) The Soviets have exported to countries other than Cuba a number of naval combatants that are probably within the operational capabilities of the Cuban Navy. These include NANUCHKA-class guided missile patrol combatants, PETYA-class light frigates, POTI-class patrol escorts, and SHERSHEN-class torpedo boats. According to an unconfirmed December 1978 report, the Cubans might receive some NANUCHKAs. Such deliveries will probably include newer and larger ships that will extend the range of the navy's patrol and combat capabilities. (Classified by multiple sources; review on 1 Mar 99)

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