

U.S. Agents Infiltrate Cuba, Reports Indicate

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WASHINGTON—Fidel Castro may be right.

The Cuban premier complained in a televised speech a few days ago that U.S. "imperialists are shipping arms, saboteurs and agents into Cuba..."



Two days later, Ted Sorensen, a top aide to President Kennedy,

SORENSEN said Cuba is "under the closest possible surveillance, much closer than before the (October missile) crisis, and that was very close."

Sorensen did not state whether he was referring only to aerial reconnaissance, or whether the United States also has the benefit of "on-site inspection" in Cuba after all.

Officials would not be expected to discuss a possible buildup of American agents in Cuba. And they caution against reading too much into recent developments in Washington.

But would the United States resort to a finely-honed instrument just to slice butter?

The Castro regime is somewhat tougher than butter and it seems illogical that the President would be "reorganizing his bureaucratic machinery of Cuba for the sheer exercise."

The statements by Castro and Sorensen followed by about a week a shakeup in the State Department creating a special status for Cuba and centralizing control and direction of Cuban policy and operations.

There is now a man in charge of Cuba—Sterling Cottrell, a career foreign service officer who happens to have been the man in charge of reorganizing the American program to combat Communism.

Cottrell's chief aide is Robert Hurwitch, another career officer and a specialist on Cuba.

John H. Crimmins, a high-ranking State Department official as director of Caribbean and Mexican affairs, will head a new operation in Miami.

Cottrell in Washington and Crimmins in Miami are supposed to "coordinate" all government activities involving Cuba. Their jurisdiction reportedly includes even the Central Intelligence Agency.

Coordinate what? One federal agency, for example, administers a relief program for Cuban refugees; the Coast Guard and Border Patrol watch the Florida coastline; the military services recruit refugees.

But there appears to be more to this than improved housekeeping.

From a political standpoint, Cuba remains the most sensitive foreign policy issue for the President. For this and other reasons, it is regarded as unlikely that the President is content to let the Cuban situation rock along indefinitely.

One extreme — a U.S. invasion of Cuba—has been ruled out, unless Castro is foolish enough to shoot down American planes, attack our naval base at Guantanamo, or get rough with a neighbor.

The other extreme — a reconciliation with Castro — seems equally remote.

There is the announced U.S. policy of economic and diplomatic pressure on the Castro government.

But experts concede that this in itself probably is not enough to cause Castro's collapse, especially if the Soviet Union continues to supply him.

Indications are that the President is not satisfied to let it go at that.

It seems reasonable to assume that American agents continue to infiltrate Cuba. Castro runs a tight ship. They probably have had as many disappointments as successes.

Agents, of course, gather intelligence, but they presumably are prepared for other duties.

American officials regard

the Cuban situation as far more complex and fluid than it was before the October missile crisis.

Various developments are considered more possible today

than they were six months ago.

One might guess that Cottrell's job is to make certain the United States can take immediate advantage of any promising situation.

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