

# TREND

# and SIGNIFICANCE

## NEW MISSILE CRISIS BUILDING IN CUBA?

By DAN BRIGHAM

News behind that growingly bitter "debate" between the State Department and Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Sen. J. William Fulbright over Cuba's relative position as "nuisance or grave threat":

Insiders tip there's a new "missile crisis" building up on the island that will explode May 1 when Cuba-based Soviet "instructors" hand operational control to Castro's forces of a vast, island-wide net of missile launchers—according to present schedule.

The report, from unimpeachable Capitol Hill sources in Washington, is believed to have been behind Sen. Fulbright's surprising stampede from Democratic Party discipline and his "personal plea" for that "realistic reappraisal of U. S. foreign policy 'myths'."

The sources add that the bid by the chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations group was deliberately calculated for Moscow consumption — over American heads (including the Administration's) and was fired off despite White House cautions that it would be "unwise," and "appeasement at its worst."

Sen. Fulbright's intent, however, was to appeal to Khrushchev personally for an 11th hour "stay" of the Russian plans . . . perhaps with a view toward determining a new "modus vivendi" in U. S.-Cuban affairs under that "realistic reappraisal."

Best bet: it won't work. Hence the threat of the new missile crisis. Khrushchev is committed too far at home to the "Iron Guard" military clique (at whose

pleasure he "rules") to back down now without some "concrete advance" for the Moscow brand of World Communism. In short: "more concessions . . . or else"! And Fulbright would grant them.

Insiders see the operational transfer proceeding according to original Soviet plan with Cuban Reds initially manning the vast network of SAM-2 Soviet missiles—relatively short-range (40-50 mile) ground-to-air missiles said to be capable of downing the U-2.

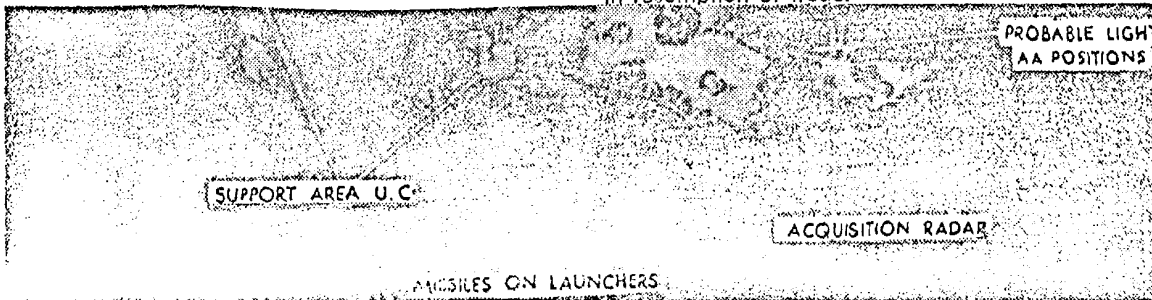
What worries U. S. defense planners most, however, is that the same launchers used for the SAM-2s can also be used for the longer-ranged (250-400 mile) SAM-3s, which are not only ground-to-air, but ground-to-ground weapons, and can carry nuclear warheads. They could reach Florida easily.

Moreover, the bulk of the SAM weapon installations are located in the compounds (hitherto barred to Cubans) where we now suspect the Reds have re-located their T-2 and T-3 intermediate range (1200 to 1800-mile) launchers in "hardened" (underground) sites. Whether there are missiles there, too, is still a moot question.

It would be entirely possible for the Kremlin to give operational control of those missiles, too, to the Cubans on a "when-and-if" basis with the Russians retaining an electronic key to prevent their being fired without Moscow's consent.

Expect repercussions as these details "leak" in Congressional debate immediately after the Easter recess. But DON'T look for Administration appeasement of Castro — yet.

We have too much at stake defending the Western Hemisphere to risk that Cuba would "honor" any pledge . . . even to the Organization of American States . . . in exchange for a semblance of "normalcy" in resumption of trade.



RUSSIAN MISSILE SITES IN CUBA ARE VASTLY IMPROVED SINCE THIS PRIMITIVE 1963 VERSION