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# Cuba's MIGs

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WASHINGTON — While the public gaze is focused on the crisis in West Berlin and at the United Nations, U.S. defense officials are closely watching the aggressive maneuvers of Dictator Castro's small jet air force.

The growing Cuban air force which now consists of a dozen Soviet-built MIG17s, is sending single planes flying high-altitude missions toward the United States.

The MIGs, piloted by Cuban air force personnel trained in Czechoslovakia, always turn back to Cuba after getting about 30 miles from the Florida coast.

The Navy or Air Force is making no effort to intercept these Cuban jets, since the planes are not violating U.S. air space. However, when spotted by U.S. patrol planes, the MIGs are tracked should they stray within the three-mile limit of the United States, the planes will be forced down.

**FLIGHTS MILES HIGH** — The mysterious flights are being conducted at altitudes of more than 35,000 feet.

Castro's apparent goal is to build up experience among his pilots in flying the "water corridor" between the United States and Cuba.

With a potential air force of 25 MIG17s (an estimated 13 of the jets are still in crates) and the pilots to fly them, Castro will soon possess Latin America's showiest and most up-to-date air force.

Already, U.S. military intelligence is warning that Castro's air force will become bolder as more planes become operational.

They expect the Cuban jets to and operations in the Castro to flex their muscles much closer to the Florida coast to show Latin nations that Castro can thumb his nose at the United States from his "privileged sanctuary" without getting into serious trouble.

**CHANGING COURSE** — Allen Dulles, who is retiring next month as head of the Central Intelligence Agency, is doing a strange backflip on Cuba.

Dulles, whose agents planned and directed the ill-fated Cuban invasion last April, is now joining administration officials who oppose a tougher policy on Cuba.

In a national intelligence estimate sent to the White House, Dulles takes the position that the United States should not cut off all trade with Castro.

The CIA director contends that an iron-tight embargo, as being urged by Democratic congressional leaders, would hurt the United States more with public opinion in Latin America than the good that would come out of it. He believes that Castro will have a propaganda holiday, if an embargo is imposed, by charging that the United States is refusing to sell food and medicine to the Cuban people.

This CIA view is directly opposite of that held by the Defense Department.

**U.S. GAINS FORECAST** — In a letter to President Kennedy, Cyrus R. Vance, general counsel of the Defense Department, states flatly that the United States would be the big gainer, reporting:

"The economic effects of an embargo on Cuba might well be serious food shortages there. These shortages would increase unrest

... U.S. interests would not be vitally affected by the embargo... Naval base of the United States, situated in Cuba, would not be affected."

As reported in this column on Sept. 29, Cuban exports to the United States consist of \$30 million of tobacco, fruit and sugar molasses annually. U.S. sales to Cuba now consist of about \$20 million in medical supplies, fats and other foodstuffs a year.

On July 6, 1960, the Cuban sugar quota was withdrawn by former President Eisenhower on action initiated by Congress. Shortly thereafter, in October 1960, a partial economic embargo was imposed. Under this restriction, no U.S. goods can be exported to Cuba except foodstuffs and medical supplies.

Kennedy asked for the CIA estimate to help him decide on whether he should invoke the Trading with the Enemy Act against the Castro regime. If he invokes the act, all trade with Cuba will be barred.

The President's decision is expected within a few days.

**INTELLIGENCE FLASHES** — The Central Intelligence Agency reports that Prensa Latina, once the most respected paper in Havana, now has a new editor, Fernando Revuelta. Revuelta is a Spanish nationalist who just arrived in Cuba from Mexico. According to the CIA report, Revuelta was given the post in order to try to win back the confidence of Latin American diplomats in Havana. Revuelta is a Communist, according to the CIA, but this isn't generally known throughout South America.

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