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CUBA

Anti-Castro fighters on 19 April virtually ended their organized resistance in the beachhead area as the Castro regime, under strong air cover, deployed its tanks and artillery against them. The survivors dispersed into the countryside later the same day. Sporadic outbreaks of anti-government guerrilla activity continue in the Escambray Mountains of Las Villas and three of the other five provinces. These resistance forces, however, are relatively small and poorly armed.

The extent of the casualties and damages suffered by the Castro government remains unclear. It was alleged [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that Che Guevara had "shot himself accidentally and wounded himself in the head," and was in "grave" condition in a hospital in Pinar del Rio. Guevara's death or permanent disability would constitute a serious loss to the Castro regime, but there is no confirmation of the above report.

No general internal uprising against Castro materialized, and the tightened police controls and systematic terrorism against anti-Castro elements have for the present significantly strengthened the regime's domestic position. The number of announced arrests and executions of "counterrevolutionaries" markedly increased following 17 April.

[REDACTED] G-2 headquarters in Santiago instructed a subordinate unit in Oriente province to "prepare very summary proceedings against those who were going to commit crimes in order that they may be executed." [REDACTED] ordered G-2 units in Las

Villas and Camaguey provinces to "search churches, convents, and religious colleges in an orderly manner," placing all suspected anti-Castro forces under arrest.

On 18 April the Cuban national radio network announced the arrest of the Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Havana Province, long one of the church's outspoken critics of the Castro regime. Also announced the same day were the arrests of a number of other priests and the capture of anti-Castro leader Humberto Sori Marin, Castro's first minister of agriculture, who reportedly was wounded while trying to evade arrest. Sori Marin was one of those executed by the government on 19 April.

#### Free World Reactions

The Communist parties in other Latin American countries engaged in a general effort, in coordination with pro-Castro groups--and in some cases with Cuban Embassy personnel--to exert as much pressure on the governments as possible by means of public demonstrations and work stoppages in support of Castro. Most of the anti-US demonstrations were effectively controlled by local security forces. Some pro-Castro demonstrations were still continuing on 20 April.

The Argentine public reaction generally accented past contrasts between the increasingly frequent criticism of Castro in the responsible press and the anti-US demonstrations by Argentine youths, who have been extensively cultivated by Cuban and Communist propaganda.

The Brazilian Government stated on 17 April its "most profound apprehension concerning developments in Cuba" and reiterated

its adherence to the principle of self-determination. Communist-influenced peasant leagues in Recife and students in Rio de Janeiro staged non-violent protest demonstrations.

Mexico adopted a strict hands-off policy in regard to the conflict in Cuba, while it observed in an official statement that Cuban "aspirations of economic and social improvement have found a highly favorable echo in the conscience of the peoples of America." Ex-President Lazaro Cardenas was not allowed to fly to Cuba to make his much-heralded stand of solidarity with Castro, and the most important Mexican newspapers--all responsive to government policy--said that Castro's sellout of the Cuban revolution to Communism was responsible for the outbreak.

Editorial comment on the Cuban fighting was generally sympathetic to the anti-Castro cause in many Latin American newspapers, including the majority of those of Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. Anti-Castro groups in Guatemala and Peru called on their governments to recognize the "provisional Cuban government of Miro Cardona, and Costa Rican student groups demanded that relations with Castro's Cuba be broken.

Reaction to Cuban developments among the Afro-Asian countries was marked by several protest demonstrations against "American imperialism," such as those of 17 and 18 April in Tokyo and Cairo. Indian Prime Minister Nehru reportedly described the Cuban situation as "very distressing," both in terms of itself and of its broader repercussions. Nasir sent a special message of support to Fidel Castro in which he described the anti-Castro action as "a crime against world

peace and against the free conscience of mankind."

#### Sino-Soviet Bloc Reaction

Moscow's reaction to the landings in Cuba produced the strongest and most direct criticism of over-all US policy since 20 January. In his letter to President Kennedy on 18 April, Khrushchev accused the US of having armed and equipped the rebel forces and charged that the aircraft which bombed Cuban targets on 16 April "belong to the USA." A Soviet government statement, also issued on 18 April, denounced Washington for "pursuing the reactionary imperialist policy of Dulles and Eisenhower which has been condemned by the nations."

Khrushchev's letter, moreover, contained a thinly veiled charge of bad faith on the part of the US. After recalling the recent exchanges between American and Soviet officials concerning the "mutual wish of the parties to exert joint efforts directed toward the improvement of relations between our countries and the prevention of a danger of war," he asked, "how are we to understand what is really being done by the US now that the attack on Cuba has become a fact?"

Although the USSR moved vigorously to mobilize world opinion against the US and generate alarm over events in Cuba, Soviet pronouncements carefully avoided any commitments to specific counteraction. Khrushchev's letter fell far short of his "rocket threat" of last July. No mention was made of that statement or subsequent warnings, and the only allusion was a reference to the "military techniques" which make it possible for any "so-called small war" to produce a chain reaction.

Soviet media have reported protest meetings throughout the USSR. Crowds of students and workers ranging in size up to several thousand demonstrated in front of the US Embassy in Moscow on 18 April. Police and security forces, however, maintained close control over the demonstrators, restricting the size of the crowd by forcing delegations to move on before permitting new groups to arrive. The embassy commented that the demonstration appeared to have more real political content and posed more real concern for the government than the demonstration against the US landing in Lebanon in 1958, which was handled by a relatively small security force.

Demonstrations were also staged in all the European satellite capitals.

Peiping's propaganda coverage of the Cuban situation has been massive--the regime is staging large protest rallies in Chinese cities and devoting up to 75 percent of its broadcasts to the subject. It is using the Cuban crisis to underscore a favorite thesis, that the Kennedy administration is "even more aggressive" than the Eisenhower administration. An official Chinese Communist statement on 20 April said the Cuban attack exposes the "hypocritical US peace talk" in regard to Laos.

The statement also linked the Cuban situation to tensions in the Taiwan Strait, citing US "occupation" of Taiwan and other cases of "US aggression" in the area, and said the Chinese stand "on the same battle front" as the Cuban people. The statement then pledged "all necessary measures in every field" to support Cuba, but

did not specify any action Peiping might take.

At the UN

Among UN General Assembly members, particularly those of the Afro-Asian bloc, the rebel landing caused a sharp deterioration in support for the US on Cuba's charges of US "aggressive actions" pending since last September and reiterated several times by Foreign Minister Roa from 15 April on. A member of the delegation of the Central African Republic probably summed up the generally prevailing mood when he told the US delegation that his government was following charges and countercharges closely, "waiting to see which side proved to be right." The Senegalese delegate commented that even moral approval of the attacking group in Cuba "threatened Cuba's independence and suggested condonation of nonofficial aid."

The bitter debate is expected to continue for some time. Four draft resolutions have been presented--two by the Soviet bloc and one by Mexico, in addition to the US-supported resolution sponsored by seven Latin American countries--and other drafts are reportedly in preparation. Mexico--without notifying other Latin American states in advance--submitted on 18 April a draft resolution urging all states "to ensure that their territories and resources are not used to promote the civil war in Cuba." The Venezuelan and Argentine UN delegates, sharply critical of the Mexican move, believed that while the Mexican draft would not have much effect on the Latin Americans, it would draw the support of Afro-Asian members.