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CUBAN DEVELOPMENTS

Observances in Havana of the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution included a special reception for the Soviet ambassador given by the government-controlled labor confederation and attended by high Cuban officials. Ambassador Kudryavtsev again pledged Soviet "aid and support" for the Cuban revolution.

Che Guevara, on the Moscow leg of his five-nation Sino-Soviet bloc economic mission, issued a statement for the 7 November festivities in which he implied a similarity between the early post-revolutionary struggles of the Soviet people, "the first in the world to take power in their own hands," and Cuba's current experiences. He added that the Soviet people "supported us by your warnings to the imperialists, thus destroying their machinations against Cuba." Moscow press reporting of a recent speech by President Dorticos suggests a Cuban-Soviet decision to claim that Cuban mobilization and the Soviet rocket threat have so far averted the "imperialist aggression" that a week ago was declared imminent.

[REDACTED] at least 43 of the Spanish-speaking pilots, presumably Cubans, being trained in Czechoslovakia may have had no prior flight experience and are undergoing primary training in piston-type planes. Over 100 Cubans are believed to have gone to Czechoslovakia for training last July and August.

[REDACTED] four more Soviet helicopters left a Soviet port on 26 October for Cuba aboard the freighter Arkhangelsk. Cuba has already received perhaps as many as ten such helicopters. Meanwhile, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] confirm earlier reports that Czech sub-machine guns have been issued to units of the Cuban Army.

East German Communist leader Paul Verner, who attended the Cuban Communist party congress last August, said late last month that Cuba will probably announce its recognition of East Germany in December, according to [REDACTED]

Verner added that the possibility of closer Cuban - East German economic cooperation will be thoroughly explored in the near future. He was probably referring to the scheduled arrival of Che Guevara's economic mission in East Germany later this month or early next. Cuban journalists visiting East Germany on 4 November signed an agreement with "East German journalists" for cooperation in the "anti-imperialist struggle," according to the East German news agency.

An increasing number of Cuban delegations are now traveling in the Sino-Soviet bloc: a ballet troupe and a "peace" movement delegation are in the USSR; journalist delegations are visiting East Germany and USSR; a labor delegation is in the USSR; and a "health" mission has been visiting Communist China and North Korea.

[REDACTED] the Cuban Embassy in Prague

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[REDACTED], including Abraham Grobart. Grobart, a 55-year-old veteran of the international Communist movement, lived in Cuba between 1924 and 1950. He became a Cuban citizen in 1936, after which he was repeatedly and reliably reported to be the top Soviet agent in the Caribbean area. He is known to have been high in the councils of the Cuban Communists' Popular Socialist party. In 1950, he was smuggled out of Cuba on a Soviet vessel and since then has presumably been in Prague or Moscow.

Meanwhile, Cuba is apparently seeking to circumvent US export controls by expanding its trade relations with Canadian and Western European firms which could provide equipment unavailable in the bloc at this time. The press has reported the negotiation of a deal under which a "pool" of Canadian and British firms would sell Cuba equipment and buy Cuban sugar and gasoline --the latter presumably refined from Soviet crude. The sponsors of the "pool" would reportedly invite West European firms to join.

A Canadian Embassy officer in Havana told the US Embassy on 4 November that the press stories were presumably based on the activities in Cuba of a Canadian promoter who is known to have discussed such a scheme with Cuban economic officials. The Canadian expressed an unfavorable opinion of the promoter and doubted that any "responsible" Canadian interest would join in the scheme. However, he could not discount the possibility that some independent distributor in Canada may be interested in handling Cuban gasoline.

The Castro regime continues its active propaganda support for leftist-revolutionary groups in other Latin American countries and is reportedly aiding some of them materially. A usually reliable source with contacts among high Cuban officials reports, for instance, that Che Guevara, with the approval of Fidel and Raul Castro, is giving financial assistance and intends to provide weapons to the Guatemalan Communist party and a Communist-infiltrated Guatemalan revolutionary group on the condition that the Guatemalan Communists play the leading role in a revolution designed to destroy the Guatemalan Army and arm the masses. Former Guatemalan President Arbenz and Guatemalan Communist leaders Fortuny and Pellecer now are in Cuba and reportedly are involved in the plot.

The sudden resurgence of leftist influence in El Salvador after the 26 October coup could lead to a situation easily exploited by the Cubans and could become a serious threat to the Guatemalan and other Central American governments.

[REDACTED] the Nicaraguan ambassador in Costa Rica reported to President Somoza that an officer of the Cuban Embassy in Costa Rica had promised military aid to the Nicaraguan revolutionary movement.

Cuban propaganda media continue to attack Venezuelan President Betancourt, and to support the strong extreme leftist and Communist opposition to his government. Communist and Communist-infiltrated parties and groups in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and other countries have publicly declared their support for Castro

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in recent weeks, and a usually reliable Brazilian student source reports that the Cuban Embassy in Rio de Janeiro organized and financed the pro-Castro demonstration there on 4 November.

[REDACTED]
Peruvian concern over the reported infiltration of Cuban agents into neighboring Ecuador. The Cubans' purposes are said to be to cause disturbances during the inter-American conference scheduled to open in the Ecuadorean capital next March and to support Ecuador's position in its border dispute with Peru.

Havana continues to strengthen its military potential, particularly through the civilian militia, on the pretext of preparing for an attack by "imperialist-backed counter-revolutionaries." A usually reliable source resident in the city of Santiago reports that

the militia in Santiago Province has been notably improved in discipline and effectiveness and concludes that it is probably capable of suppressing any rebellion or invasion by counterrevolutionaries. Selected militiamen are being formed into units to handle some of the more complex weapons such as anti-aircraft artillery received from the Soviet bloc.

[REDACTED]
Communist penetration of the militia, probably extensive,

[REDACTED]
the adjutant of a military district instructed a subordinate that, in order to organize the militia in his zone, he should summon various military and civilian leaders, including leaders of the Popular Socialist (Communist) party.