

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

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Question 1. Looking at the total Soviet merchant fleet, but most particularly, those capable of carrying grain, including tankers, how many have never been to Cuban or DRV ports since our policy was not to allow Soviet vessels on voyages to these two countries to call at U.S. ports?

The Soviet merchant fleet at the end of 1971 consisted of 1,470 ships totalling 12.4 million deadweight tons (DWT). Experience in previous grain lifts from the US to the USSR indicates that although both tankers and dry cargo vessels are likely to be used, vessels of either type of less than 10,000 DWT are unlikely to be used in significant numbers. The exclusion of these smaller ships leaves a residual of 467 tankers and dry cargo ships with a total of 8 million DWT that could be used to carry grain. Of these, a very large proportion, perhaps as high as 90%, have stopped at either Cuban or North Vietnamese ports or both during the time periods stipulated in the NSAM's. The percentage figure could be somewhat lower, however, inasmuch as many of these ships are active in both the Cuban and North Vietnamese trades and time does not permit the elimination of possible double counting.

Given the scale of Soviet-Cuban trade in 1971, which saw 415 dry cargo ship calls deliver 3.1 million tons of dry cargo and 246 tanker calls deliver 6.5 million tons of petroleum, there apparently would be sufficient tonnage to pick up well over a million tons of grain at U.S. ports. For example, almost all Soviet tankers in 1971 returned to their home ports in ballast. Depending on the size of the Cuban sugar harvest and Soviet fleet scheduling elsewhere, from 25 to 50% of the dry cargo ships could also be allocated to the U.S. grain lift on their return voyages to the USSR.

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If other Soviet ships are to be used, about 165,000 DWT would be required to move one million tons of grain per year.* The USSR probably would not be able to make a tonnage of this or even a lesser magnitude available on short notice for a grain lift from the US. With almost half of its own seaborne trade still moving in foreign ships, the USSR has little difficulty in keeping its own ships fully employed. Thus, even after the USSR had made the decision to allocate 165,000 DWT of its ships to such a lift, it might be three months before all the required ships could be released from their previous commitments.

* Assumes all grain moving eastbound across Atlantic, from New Orleans to Novorossiysk on 11,000 DWT, 15 knot dry cargo ships.

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Question 2. State Department is alleging that in 1967 the OAS was considering a resolution that member states would decline to ship any Latin American government or government-financed cargo on vessels that called at Cuban ports.

a. Was this resolution adopted?

Yes. The Ministerial level session of the Twelfth Meeting of OAS Consultations of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in September 1967, with the exceptions of Mexico who abstained, unanimously adopted broad resolutions condemning Cuba's export of revolution and recommending restrictions on trade. Included in these resolutions was paragraph 9, resolution III which recommended that the governments of member states decline to ship any governmental or government-financed cargo in any vessel that, following the date of this resolution (25 September 1967), has engaged in the shipment of cargo to or from Cuba. In addition, the governments of the member states were to take necessary measures to prohibit the supply of fuel to any such vessel in their ports, with the exception of cases in which shipments are made for humanitarian purposes.

b. Is it in effect now?

Yes. This resolution is currently in effect and we are not aware of any countries in violation of the resolution.

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