

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*Memorandum*

APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: JAN 2002



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THE CRISIS  
USSR/CUBA

Information as of 0600

26 October 1962

PREPARED FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL.

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26 October 1962

SC No. 08181/62

SUMMARY CONTENTS

I. Surveillance of 25 October shows that the construction of IRBM and MRBM bases in Cuba is proceeding largely on schedule; now level photography confirms that the MRBM bases will use the 1,020-nautical-mile SS-4 missile. No additional sites, launchers or missiles have been located, but there is road construction around Remedios which suggests the fourth IRBM site we have been expecting there. We estimate that it would cost the USSR more than twice as much and take considerably longer to add to its ICBM strike capability from the USSR as great an increment as the potential salvo from Cuban launching sites.

II. Only two Soviet freighters--and five tankers, one of them already past the quarantine line--still are headed for Cuba. The BELOVODSK, with twelve MI-4 helicopters, is in the North Atlantic; the PUGACHEV appears to have slowed or stopped several days west of the Panama Canal. A total of 16 dry cargo ships now are carried as having turned back toward the USSR on 23 October.

Two Soviet civil air flights are scheduled for Havana with passengers; cargo, if any, is not known. One may be turned back by Guinea today. A TU-114 is scheduled via Senegal to reach Havana 1 November.

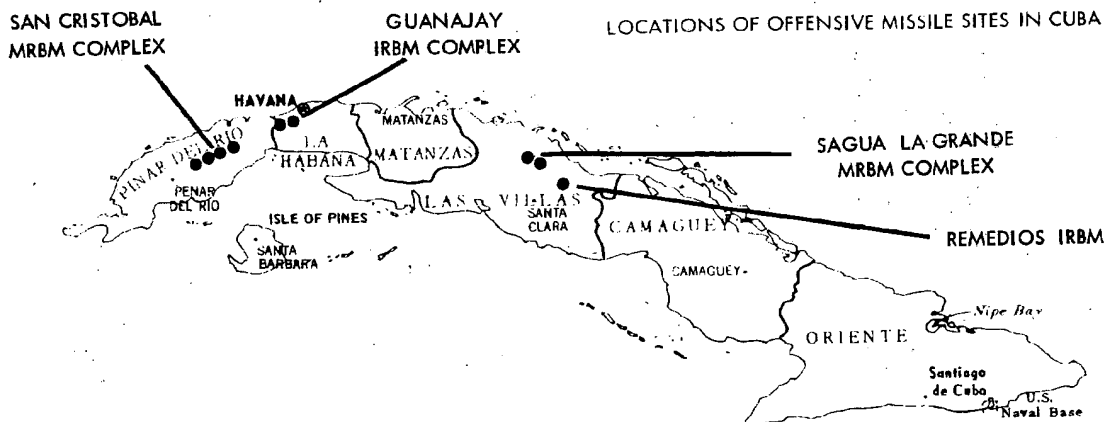
III. There are further indications that some Soviet and satellite elements, particularly air and ground elements in Eastern Europe and European Russia, are on an alert or readiness status. No major deployments have been detected, however, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There is some evidence that additional tactical aircraft have been placed on five-minute alert in East Germany, where two areas along the West German border have been closed off for exercises.

Moscow highlights Khrushchev's acceptance of U Thant's appeal in a bid to start US-Soviet negotiations. Peiping, however, is irritated that the Soviet response to US action is not stronger. The Communists still deny there are any offensive weapons in Cuba.

IV. There is no major change or significant new development in non-bloc reaction to the crisis. Most of the OAS nations have offered to participate in some form in the quarantine, and NATO members have agreed with minor reservations to deny landing and overflight rights to Soviet planes bound for Cuba.

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26 October 1962

I. THE SITUATION IN CUBA

Photography of 25 October shows continued rapid construction activity at each of four MRBM sites. The use of camouflage and canvas to cover critical equipment at these sites continues.

No new missile sites have been identified, but road construction activity in the Remedios area suggests plans to locate the expected second IRBM site there.

Low level photography clearly indicates that the MRBM sites are for the SS-4 (SANDAL) 1,0200-nautical mile ballistic missile system. Photography of 25 October shows cables at two MRBM sites running from missile-ready tents into the woods where generators probably are located. This strongly suggests that missiles are being checked out in the tents.

It now is estimated that San Cristobal Site 2 will achieve a full operational capability on 26 October instead of 25 October. Heavy rain has recently fallen on this site.

The four Soviet cargo ships originally en route to Cuba which were suspected to be delivering ballistic missiles are continuing their eastward course towards the USSR.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The cost of the Soviet arms buildup in Cuba, including military equipment already supplied plus that which will be needed to complete the missile sites under construction, is estimated to amount to at least \$750 million, and may be as much as \$1 billion. One-third of this is accounted for by the IRBM and MRBM systems. Although the cost of setting up these sites in Cuba appears high, it would probably cost the USSR more than twice as much to establish a comparable increment in the USSR to the present Soviet ICBM strike capabilities against the US. Moreover, MRBM/IRBM systems can be positioned in Cuba in considerably less time than would be needed to construct ICBM bases in the USSR.

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Efforts to step up Cuban military preparedness continue. The armed forces remain under strict orders not to fire unless fired upon. There still is no indication in COMINT that Cuban tactical aircraft have resumed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Military traffic is heavy on most of the country's highways, and several roads and beach areas have been closed to all civilian use. Press reports from Havana state that the city is bristling with gun emplacements and other evidences of military readiness. Che Guevara reportedly has established a military command post at the town of Corral de la Palma in Pinar del Rio Province, and Raul Castro is alleged to have gone to Oriente Province--his usual post during previous military alerts. Fidel reportedly remains in Havana.

[REDACTED] beneath the surface calm regime officials are apprehensive over possibilities of internal uprisings and/or invasion. Suspected dissidents are being rounded up [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There is some evidence of confusion within military units over mobilization procedures and irritation with supply problems.

The general public continues its display of outward tranquility [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] A 25 October broadcast from Santa Clara, capital of Las Villas Province, reported drastic new consumption controls on gasoline and motor oil; similar measures may have been instituted elsewhere. The broadcast also described reports of food and fuel shortages as "rumors spread by the counterrevolution at the service of Yankee imperialism." The broadcast was presumably aimed at discouraging scare buying, which has been reported from several Cuban cities.

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II. SOVIET SHIPPING AND FLIGHTS TO CUBA

Only two Soviet dry cargo ships are believed still to be en route to Cuba--apparently carrying non-military cargoes. The BELOVODSK, presently in the North Atlantic [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The other ship, the E. PUGACHEV, which is en route from Vladivostok, may have slowed down or temporarily stopped in the North Pacific, several days out from the Panama Canal.

Five Soviet tankers also are en route to Cuba, one having already passed into the quarantine zone. In addition, four European satellite ships, including an East German passenger ship, appear to be continuing their voyages to Cuba.

A total of 16 Soviet dry cargo ships now are estimated to have altered their courses and headed back toward the USSR on 23 October. Most--if not all--are believed to have been carrying military cargoes.

The USSR has scheduled two special civil aircraft flights to Havana. An IL-18, apparently routed via Guinea and Brazil, probably will arrive in Cuba tomorrow. A Guinean official told the US embassy on 25 October that permission for such flights via Conakry would be refused, and it is possible the aircraft, already en route, will not be allowed to transit Guinea. A TU-114 is scheduled to fly via Senegal to Havana, arriving there on 1 November. Some passengers are to be aboard both flights but the cargo, if any, is not known.

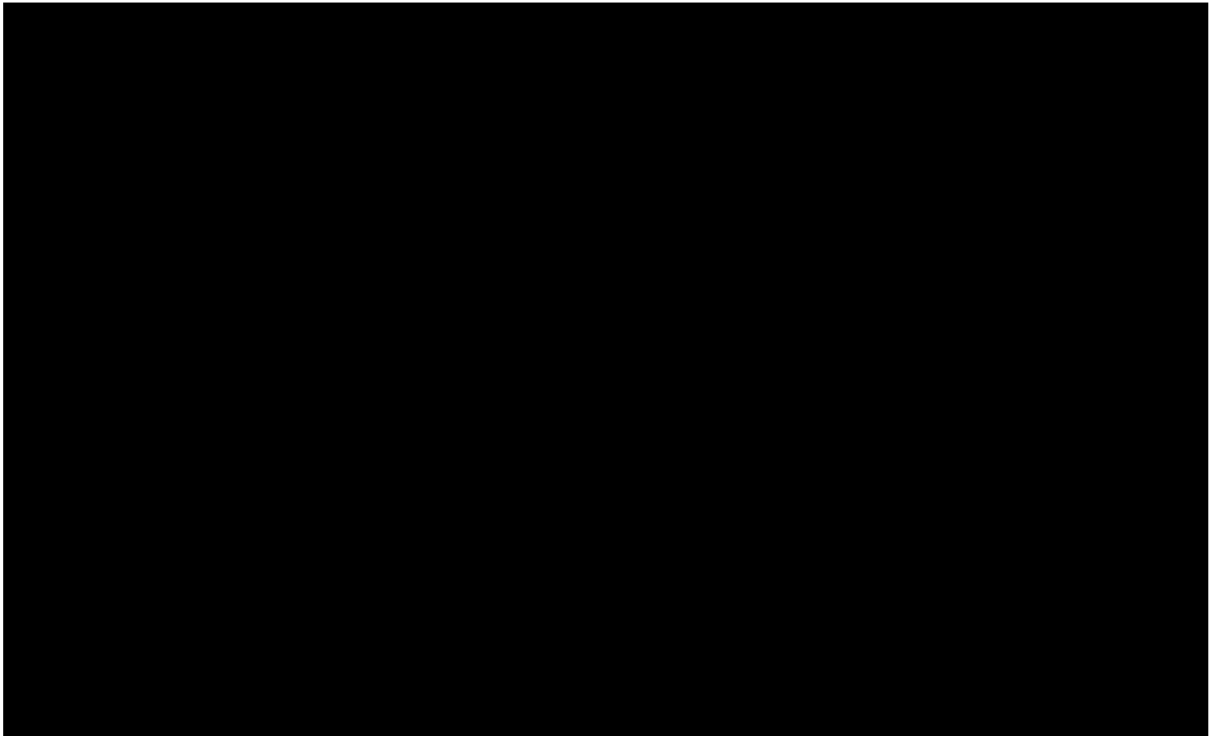
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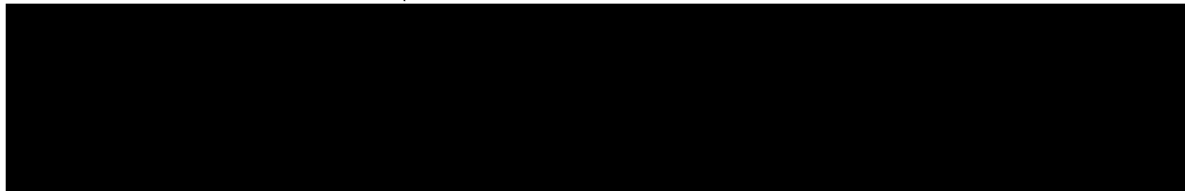
III. THE SITUATION IN THE BLOC

A. MILITARY

We have noted the following Soviet military developments; an assessment of their significance will be issued later this morning by the USIB Watch Committee.



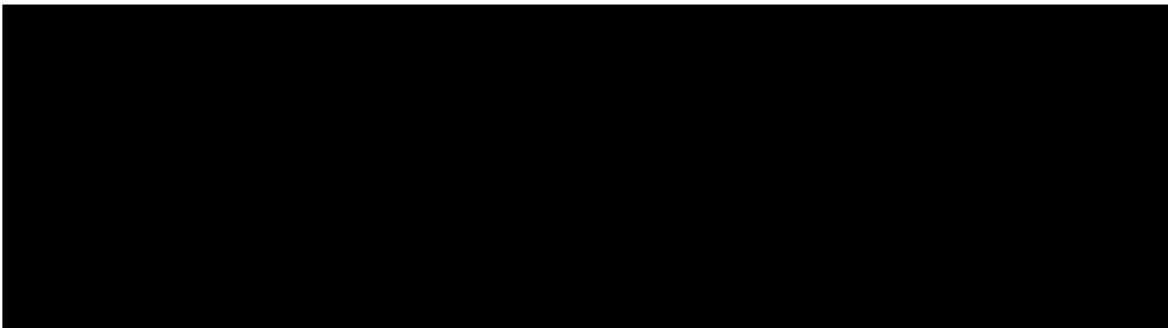
Ground: Soviet forces in Germany may be preparing for a major exercise. Two temporary restricted areas have been set up in East Germany along the border with the Federal Republic, effective through 4 November. Both areas are below air corridors into Berlin and in close proximity to major east-west autobahns. Any troop buildup in these areas could be readily observed.



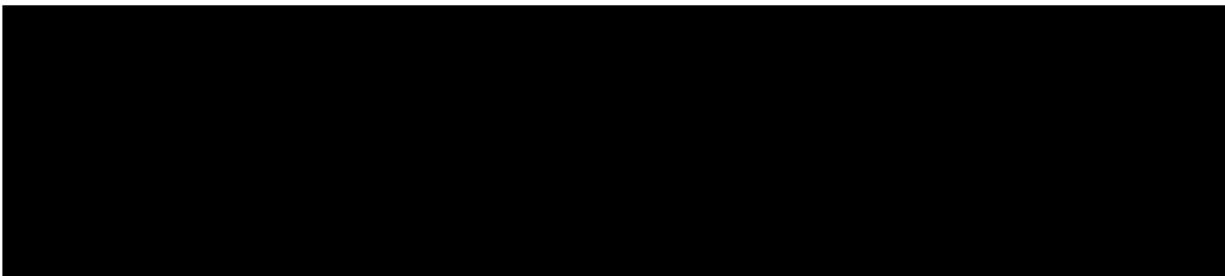
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Naval: Exercise activity continues in the Pacific, Baltic and Black Seas.



A Vladivostok radio broadcast noted that the Soviet Pacific Fleet was in a readiness state as ordered by the Supreme Command.

The UK naval attaché to Moscow was denied a trip to Leningrad on 25 October. This may have been because of the return of merchant ships on the Cuban run.

The East German Navy has apparently cancelled leaves.



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B. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Khrushchev's prompt acceptance of U Thant's appeal on Cuba is calculated to strengthen Soviet efforts to involve the US in protracted negotiations. The Soviet leaders clearly believe that a temporary suspension of arms deliveries would be a small price to pay for arrangements which, they hope, will effectively forestall further US actions against the military buildup in Cuba.

In commenting on Khrushchev's reply to U Thant, Pravda this morning urged that the US exercise caution in the present crisis. This advice is backed up by a Red Star article entitled "Cuba is Not Alone," which repeated previous claims concerning the accuracy and destructiveness of Soviet rockets and reiterated that the USSR has "successfully solved the problem of the antimissile missile." Numerous reports appear in today's Soviet press of meetings in the USSR protesting US "aggressive actions" and pledging support of the policies of the Soviet government.

There has been no change in the tone or substance of Moscow's approach to the US revelation of the presence of Soviet offensive weapons in Cuba. In his rebuttal to US photographic evidence of missile bases in Cuba, Zorin in the UN charged that the photographs were forgeries and reiterated there was no need to establish such bases outside the USSR. Repeating this theme, Soviet propaganda continues to claim that the US is making use of the "big lie" technique in its charges against the Soviet Union and to deny that there are any offensive weapons in Cuba.

Elsewhere, bloc spokesmen remain cautious in their private statements on the Cuban issue, suggesting that they have not as yet been given a line for dissemination to foreigners. Some bloc representatives have sought to give the impression that Cuba was not important enough to the USSR to cause it to go to war at present.

Communist China apparently is irritated because the Soviet Union has not adopted a more aggressive posture. Peiping has portrayed the cautious Russian statement of 23 October as a declaration of intent to "smash" US aggression, called the US a "paper tiger," and urged a "resolute blow-for-blow struggle" to combat American moves. Chinese Communist press statements tend to minimize the Russian role in the Cuban crisis while playing up the importance of support for Cuba by the Chinese--called "the most reliable friends of the Cuban people."

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The East German regime has decreed an operational readiness alert for selected party officials, who have been authorized to carry firearms and instructed to maintain logs showing the whereabouts of those of their subordinates who occupy key positions in the district and county-level party apparatus. In addition, the regime has called for daily reports on the state of popular morale.

In the only East European comment thus far on developments at the UN, the East German news agency described the President's reply to U Thant as "a noncommittal US propaganda maneuver," adding that the announcement that the quarantine would continue "confirmed that US President Kennedy is not prepared to accept the proposals of U Thant and N. S. Khrushchev...."

Hungarian and Bulgarian authorities may have interfered with communications between the US Legations in Budapest and Sofia and the Department of State. Both legations use local, national-owned circuits, communicating with Washington via Vienna or Frankfurt. The Legation in Sofia reported the telex circuit out of operation during the night of 23-24 October and the circuit from the Legation in Budapest was subject to frequent interruptions during the day on 24 October. The US Chargé protested to Hungarian Foreign Ministry officials, who assured him that there would be no further difficulty.

Anti-American demonstrations of varying scale have been staged in four of the five East European satellite capitals where there are US missions. A Hungarian news agency reported that 10,000 inhabitants of Budapest had protested in front of the US Legation on 24 October, but the Chargé reports "the local scene is quiet."

The same day some 500 students at Warsaw Polytechnic Institute organized a protest rally, but returned to class when extra police hurriedly were stationed around the Embassy. The Gomulka regime reportedly does not intend to permit demonstrations or conduct an internal propaganda campaign for fear of sparking a war scare and a run on food stocks, which are already low.

Also on 24 October, a Bulgarian Foreign Ministry official assured the US Minister that "if a demonstration was organized, protection also would be organized." Three hours later, the arrival of a strong police guard at the Legation dampened preparations for a demonstration, and a crowd of youths dispersed.

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Yesterday, 1,000 Czechs pulled down the flag and smashed windows at the US Embassy in Prague. Police earlier refused to clear a path through the demonstrators for an embassy car returning the Chargé from an official luncheon.

The Ulbricht regime has called for "solidarity demonstrations." Yesterday East German police directed a US Army patrol into a street where such a rally was underway. The car was beat upon and lost radio contact with US headquarters in West Berlin before breaking free and returning to West Berlin.

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IV. NON-BLOC REACTION

The UN Security Council has suspended its debate on the Cuban crisis indefinitely following the announcement by Acting Secretary General U Thant that he would consult privately with representatives of the US, USSR, and Cuba. Pending the outcome of these consultations, the "non-aligned group" has also halted its plans for sponsoring a resolution in the Council.

Except for some reduction in the nervousness of the West German press, there is little reflection in non-bloc comment of the turnaround of Soviet ships and the US and Soviet responses to U Thant's proposals for avoiding a confrontation on the high seas.

There are continuing instances of demonstrations in Asian, European and Latin American countries, but participation is limited largely to Communist and avowedly pacifist elements. At this hour none seems likely to assume massive proportions.

The Shah of Iran has not commented publicly, but Foreign Minister Aram told Ambassador Holmes on 24 October that the Iranian delegation at the UN was being instructed to give full support to the US program, including extensive lobbying among the Afro-Asians with an eye toward possible General Assembly consideration of the crisis. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

General Lebanese opinion is reported almost "jubilant" at what is considered a great free world victory, particularly because the US challenge is directed at the USSR rather than "pygmy Castro." The official Greek attitude is that a NATO public endorsement of the US quarantine is preferable to statements by individual governments. Athens' permanent representative in Paris has been instructed to support a move in this direction.

[REDACTED]

Ankara is apprehensive that equation of US bases in Turkey and Soviet installations in Cuba may lead to Communist pressures on Turkey. Foreign Minister Erkin told Ambassador Hare on 24 October that it is essential for Turkey to receive needed military equipment quickly. A general

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mobilization order has been issued by the defense and interior ministries instructing security forces to work jointly to combat subversion and sabotage.

Algerian Premier Ben Bella, granting an appointment to chargé Porter only after a two-day delay, expressed hope for continued US economic aid, but reiterated his conviction that as a matter of principle "Cuba must be supported." He charged the US violated the UN charter by resorting to unilateral military action. The Moroccan acting foreign minister concedes the U Thant plan for a moratorium on military shipments to Cuba is unrealistic without guarantees.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Diallo of Guinea has assured Ambassador Attwood that his country has no intention of granting the USSR landing or overflight rights for air movements to Cuba. He stated that Guinea had refused a Soviet request for this purpose in September.

Asian reaction remains in low key, partly because of preoccupation with the Sino-Indian border clashes. Cambodia, however, has announced its decision to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Uruguay has now joined the other members in support of the OAS resolution. All OAS members except Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay have offered to participate in some way in the quarantine.

The two Argentine destroyers to be used in the quarantine will sail on 28 October. The Argentine Ambassador to the OAS has been instructed to urge that a joint command be set up under the OAS for naval quarantine operation rather than unified US commands. Venezuela has already urged a meeting of the Inter-American Defense Board.

Mexico, traditionally against intervention, has somewhat reluctantly agreed to support whatever measures the OAS adopts. There has been no indication whether this support would include active participation in the use of force, but President Lopez Mateos has said that any action should be under the control of international organizations.

Socialist presidential aspirant Senator Allende of Chile is reportedly unhappy about the effect of the blockade on Chilean politics because he believes the firm US stand has changed the public mood against the leftist coalition, FRAP. Allende's chances of being elected in 1964 have been considered good but his pro-Castro stand now may work against him.

Brazil sees itself as a peacemaker in the Cuban situation, proposing that the UN undertake denuclearization of Latin America. Rio feels this would permit Cuba and the Soviet Union to save face, thus diminishing the danger of direct confrontation. [REDACTED]

The Communist parties and other pro-Castro groups in Latin America were apparently caught unprepared by President Kennedy's action. They are believed to have plans for large-scale strikes, sabotage, and demonstrations in case Cuba is invaded or a counterrevolution breaks out, but they seem not to have thought out in advance what to do in less drastic situations. Actions now being organized call for demonstrations and marches and for telegrams to government officials, together with a propaganda barrage protesting the "blockade." The Communists in Latin America may feel that precipitous action in this less-than-all-out situation is likely to provoke drastic reprisals which could cripple their potential for large-scale strikes and sabotage in future emergencies. The Communist Party of Brazil has instructed the Communist-dominated maritime federations to organize a boycott of US ships.

The scattered violence and bombing which is taking place in several countries may be the work of Communists already unhappy with Moscow's reluctance to support widespread revolution in Latin America or of other hot-headed pro-Castro groups. These terrorist activities appear badly planned and largely ineffective.

Canada placed itself solidly in support of the US action with strong speeches in Commons on 25 October by Prime Minister Diefenbaker and Liberal leader Pearson. While stressing the need to find a peaceful solution, Diefenbaker said that Cuban missiles were a "direct and immediate menace to Canada," and he brushed away arguments about the legality of the quarantine with the comment that they were largely "sterile and irrelevant." He announced that Canadian Norad forces now are on the same readiness footing as US units.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Lange, addressing parliament on 25 October, expressed support only for direct negotiation between the US and USSR. The Undersecretary in the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, however, told the Yugoslav ambassador that the Soviet action in Cuba was like placing an armed aircraft carrier off US shores.

In Italy, Prime Minister Fanfani's somewhat equivocal line grows out of his fear of upsetting the delicate balance in the center-left government. We now have reports that Nenni's Socialist party will take a line sympathetic to Cuba rather than the US, although one spokesman earlier said that in any showdown a majority of Socialists would side with the West.

Officials in Spain and Portugal are supporting the US. A strong statement is expected from The Hague. The Belgian reaction is "better than expected," and officials are surprised that the US has not yet put Cuba on the COCOM list.

In the British House of Commons on 25 October, Labor leader Gaitskell expressed sympathy for the US, but also anxiety over possible Soviet retaliation. Macmillan endorsed the President's action and said the missiles were unquestionably offensive. Any Cuban settlement, he said, would have to include an accurate check on their removal, after which the world leaders should try for "wider negotiations."

At their 23 October meeting, the EEC Foreign Ministers showed "striking unanimity of support and understanding" for the US position, but felt that henceforth it will be difficult to separate the Cuban and Berlin problems. There was considerable dissatisfaction with the Berlin contingency plans, and Spaak felt that the fruitless East-West "soundings" should be replaced by a "serious" conversation.

In West Germany, where there apparently is panic buying, Defense Minister Strauss told the US MAAG chief on 25 October

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that the National Defense Council was unanimous in agreeing that Bonn should go to any length to support the US, even if it courted great danger.

The French press on 25 October reported that French armed forces have been put on "Number Two alert," the final stage before general mobilization. Foreign Minister Couve de Murville, however, does not believe there will be any Soviet action in regard to Berlin.

With certain minor reservations by some countries, agreement now has been reached within NATO to deny landings and overflights to Soviet aircraft on Cuban runs. The US now is requesting that Czech and Cuban aircraft be given similar treatment, or that they be harassed. The Canadian decision to search Cuban and Czech planes is cited as an example of effective harassment.

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