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PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

## MIKOYAN IN CUBA

Mikoyan's varied moves in Cuba, especially his new large sugar purchases, seem designed to encourage the Cuban Government's present attitude toward the United States.

The Soviet purchase of 345,000 additional tons of sugar, announced during Mikoyan's inauguration of the Soviet exhibition in Havana, has again favorably affected Cuba's position on the world market. The sale, like others by the Castro regime to Sino-Soviet bloc countries, was made at a bargain rate--at least 12 points (hundredths of a cent per pound) below the already low world price. In a speech at the exhibition, Cuban Commerce Minister Cepero cited these bloc purchases as of great value in helping Cuba sell its unusually large carry-over from the 1959 crop.

The already apparent advantages of the sugar deal will encourage Cuban officials to favor bloc trade in their efforts to reduce economic dependence on the United States. Cepero specifically welcomed increased Soviet-Cuban trade. Most previous sales to the USSR have been for cash, but this may be the first of a series of barter deals. Mikoyan reportedly said on 8 February that the USSR is interested in buying more sugar if Cuba will buy machinery and other products from the USSR.

Mikoyan, in a boastful speech at the exhibition, indirectly encouraged Castro's illegal land seizures. He said,

"The secret consists in the establishment of the rule of workers and peasants, in the liquidation of the exploitation of man by man, in the confiscation--without any compensation--of all means of production and land, mineral resources, and forests, and in transferring all these riches to their real owners--the people."

The Castro government is also encouraging closer relations with other bloc countries. An East German trade mission is in Havana, and the Mexican ambassador in Prague reports that a Cuban delegation arrived there on 8 February to purchase munitions--one of several such missions reported to have visited Czechoslovakia in the past six months. In Havana, an untested source, in a position to observe, reports that Prensa Latina, the Castro-subsidized Latin American news agency, now has a radio transmitter equipped to send messages in code to the Czech news service in Prague, a highly unusual communication system for a news agency.

There are some signs of concern, even among Castro's supporters, over Cuba's rapid moves toward closer relations with Moscow. Some are reported to fear adverse reaction in the rest of Latin America. Others reportedly fear that Soviet influence is likely to destroy the Cuban revolution--by direct economic or political influence, by strengthening the Cuban Communist party's campaign to capitalize on Castro's program, or by provoking US action.

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The attempt by Catholic students to replace a wreath bearing the hammer and sickle which Mikoyan had placed at Cuban hero Jose Marti's statue

and the attack on them, reportedly by Communist "goon squads," may have encouraged defiance of Castro and reduced the impact of the exhibition.

UNRELEVANT  
NOT RELEVANT  
TO BAY OF PIGS

