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CUBA

Bloc military shipments to Cuba are continuing. A Soviet merchant ship, the Ivan Pavlov, is expected to arrive in Cuba about 18 March with 2,064 tons of military cargo loaded at the Soviet Black Sea port of Nikolaev in late February. Cuba is receiving regular deliveries of military vehicles from bloc ports on the Baltic Sea.

Several recent reports indicate that Cuba may be confronted with increasing agricultural difficulties. A usually reliable source of the Guantanamo naval base reported a severe shortage of wheat and lard in the area. Another report states that Cuba recently purchased more than 3,800 metric tons of corn from France--despite the fact that Cuba usually harvests three or four corn crops of its own each year. This is the largest single purchase ever made by Cuba from France.

A third report stated that the untrained white-collar workers who volunteered to assist in this year's sugar cane harvest are ruining the cane fields with faulty harvesting techniques. Nevertheless, this year's sugar crop is expected to approach the normal yearly total of about 5,500,000 to 6,000,000 tons.

Opposition forces in Cuba are continuing their campaign of sabotage, terrorism, and subversion, despite government efforts to reduce dissident activity by arrests, executions, and possible attempts to provoke a premature uprising by pro-Castro infiltrators among the opposition. A usually reliable source recently reported that Havana's La Cabana prison is filled with militiamen who re-

fused to fight against anti-Castro forces in the Escambray Mountains, and that terrorism in the capital is reaching disruptive proportions."

that sabotage is increasing in all six provinces and that the opposition is still active in the Escambray area; however, the scope of this activity is not indicated.

There has been no sign of a letup in the Castro regime's barrage of anti-US statements. In a 14 March speech at Havana University, the Cuban premier lashed out at President Kennedy's ten-point Latin American aid program and said it was formulated as the result of US alarm, "not over the welfare of Latin America, but over fear of losing America." He characterized the proposed US expenditure of \$500,000,000 in Latin America as "alms" and stated his conviction that "the conscience of Latin America cannot be purchased."

He also railed against the alleged US plan to back the establishment of an anti-Castro Cuban government-in-exile, and he pledged that "as soon as imperialism forms a counter-revolutionary government-in-exile, we will form many revolutionary governments-in-exile. He specified a "Free Puerto Rico" as the first to be thus formed.

Havana has also attacked President Kennedy for his "imperialist objectives" in publicizing the recent action of the American Red Cross at the Guantanamo base in supplying what the Cubans called "dated" and "useless" polio vaccine to combat an outbreak of the disease in Guantanamo city. The

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regime's press and radio branded the creation of the US Peace Corps "demagogic" and "ridiculous" and concluded that the organization was "doomed to failure."

Argentina's offer of "good offices" to improve US-Cuban relations--an offer rejected by Cuba on 8 March--has aroused considerable discussion among other Latin American governments as to whether the Cuban problem is an issue for collective hemisphere action rather than single-country mediation. A number of leaders have indicated agreement with the US position that it is the concern of all the hemisphere nations.

The widely respected President Lleras of Colombia stated publicly on 9 March that the inter-American system "should act on, examine, and resolve the Cuban case," and that if Cuba chooses to remain outside this system, it should "accept its responsibility and, without any equivocation, permit the American nations to assume theirs." Lleras refused, however, to sever diplomatic relations with Cuba now. The Brazilian Government did not comment on the Argentine proposal and has not denied press reports that President Quadros on 28 February stated his opposition to collective intervention in Cuban affairs.