

USSR Increases Attention to  
Cuba

Since the US announcement of a partial embargo on shipments to Cuba, Moscow has stepped up its propaganda coverage of the Cuban situation. The Soviet press now carries daily warnings of alleged American plans for "counterrevolutionary invasions" from Guatemalan bases and denunciations of US trade restrictions and of Ambassador Bonsal's recall. On 22 October Soviet propaganda media gave full and prominent coverage to the reception of a Cuban journalist delegation by Khrushchev and top Soviet journalists, and Izvestia's front page was dominated by reports of "invasion preparations organized by the US."

At the United Nations on 19 October, Soviet delegate Zorin departed from the text of a speech on disarmament to make a statement supporting Cuba, noting Cuban accusations of "US aggression and acts of intervention" and charging the United States with a policy of "open military provocations." Moscow has, however, avoided any suggestion that the USSR might intervene militarily in Cuba, and there have been no references to Khrushchev's threat on 9 July to use rockets in support of Castro.

In its nonbloc trade the USSR is apparently giving top priority to filling Cuban requirements, and in the wake of new US economic restrictions will probably move to demonstrate still further its willingness to back up in economic terms its

moral and political support of the "national liberation struggle." Moscow already has made considerable and relatively costly readjustments in its shipping operations to accommodate Cuban petroleum requests and to make timely deliveries of such items as fertilizers, wheat, and, more recently, agricultural machinery and equipment.

Havana probably will seek additional economic support from the bloc. However, because of the nature of its industrial plant, Cuba may be forced to seek immediate alternate sources of supply in nonbloc countries--possibly Canada--which are better equipped to supply Cuban import needs. This may exert further pressure on Cuba's foreign exchange position.

"Che" Guevara, president of the Cuban National Bank, left on 21 October for an economic mission to the bloc and now is in Prague conferring with economic officials. He is scheduled to go on to the USSR, Communist China, North Korea, and East Germany.

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