

SECRET

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

21 January 1960

KHRUSHCHEV'S LATEST STATEMENT ON SOVIET MISSILE CAPABILITIES

Soviet Premier Khrushchev's most recent statement on Soviet missile capabilities, made on 14 January at the opening of the USSR Supreme Soviet, is the most comprehensive official expression to date of the coming dominance of missile armaments in the Soviet military establishment. The speech gives his view that these new weapons are replacing more conventional ones.

Khrushchev said, "We already have so many nuclear weapons, both atomic and hydrogen, and the necessary rockets for delivering these weapons... that...we would be able literally to wipe the country or countries which attack us off the face of the earth." At the Hungarian party congress in Budapest on 31 November, Khrushchev said the Soviet Union had a stockpile of rockets with nuclear warheads sufficient "to raze to the ground all our potential enemies."

Both these statements are general and give no indication

of the quantities that might be involved. There is a great difference between the smaller stockpile of missiles required to destroy the major cities of the West and the greater quantity necessary to attack effectively and destroy Western retaliatory forces.

One of the few statements permitting a rough numerical estimate of Soviet intentions is Khrushchev's remark in October to Austrian Foreign Minister Kreisky that the cost of shifting from conventional armaments to long-range missiles had been estimated by his military advisers to be 30 billion rubles. It is probable that expenditure of the 30 billion rubles, if indeed this were an approved program, would be made over a period of some five or six years, or to the end of the Seven-Year Plan (1959-1965). Such an expenditure might enable the USSR to produce and have on launcher by that time some 300 to 400 ICBMs and some 200 to 300 IRBMs (with ranges of 700 and 1,100 nautical miles).

~~SECRET~~

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

21 January 1960

Over the past year Khrushchev has made a series of statements designed to create in Western eyes the impression of a rapid growth of Soviet military might in the missile field. In November 1958 he claimed in his "Theses on the Seven-Year Plan" that the "production of intercontinental ballistic missiles has been set up successfully." This implied that initial tooling of ICBM production facilities had recently been completed, that the technology of production was considered mastered and probably had been demonstrated, and that initial delivery of stockpile ICBMs was about to begin.

If it was an accurate representation of the status of the program at that time, this statement would have indicated a capability to begin deliveries of such missiles early in 1959, a development implied by Khrushchev's second major remark on ICBM production, made at the 21st party congress in January 1959. He then stated that serial production of intercontinental ballistic rockets had been organized.

According to a 1957 Soviet text on aircraft production, there are three stages involved in putting a new item into serial production: preparation for production; mastery of the processes of manufacturing by the production line; and serial production and mastery of modifications. Khrushchev's claim in November 1958 would imply that the second stage had been achieved, and the statement in January 1959 would suggest that all prep-

arations for the third stage had been completed.

Even if serial production were successfully organized at the beginning of 1959, as Khrushchev wished to imply, initial rates of production would be low and production would increase gradually during the year. The USSR, therefore, could not yet have been able to achieve production and deployment of large numbers of ICBMs.

However, a small stockpile of perhaps ten ICBMs--that is, enough to attack several key US urban areas--is believed to exist. Moreover, Khrushchev's recent statement, implying a large current missile capability, cannot be wholly discredited, in that the USSR probably has had sufficient time to possess significant numbers of 700-nautical-mile missiles and some 1,100-nautical-mile missiles capable of reaching targets in Western Europe and other peripheral areas.

On 14 November 1959, in a speech to Soviet journalists which cannot logically be related to his previous ICBM statement, Khrushchev said, "In one year, 250 missiles with hydrogen warheads came off the assembly line in the factory we visited." Available evidence suggests again that, among the longer range missiles, only the 700-nautical-mile weapon has been in production long enough to permit achievement of such a production rate. Khrushchev's statement also could be true if it referred to the combined production of several missile types at one plant.

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~