

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

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29 June 1963

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Reported Use of Soviet Ships to Transport Cargoes from Mexico to Cuba.

1. There is no information available to substantiate reports that Soviet ships are being used to transport cargoes from Mexican ports to Cuba.

extremely unlikely that soviet ships could call at Mexican ports without being detected.

2. Only one Soviet merchant ship has called at a Mexican port in 1963. The IVAN POLZUBOV, a Soviet dry-cargo ship, delivered 3,016 tons of general cargo including canned food, flour, trucks, tractors and scrapers to Cuba in January 1963. After discharging this cargo at Havana, the IVAN POLZUBOV proceeded, under French charter, to the Mexican port of Coatzacoalcos where she picked up a cargo of sulphur for discharge at La Havre.

3. The only other Soviet vessels known to have called at Mexican ports since the Cuban crisis have been the Soviet fishing trawlers based in Cuba. These trawlers have made fairly frequent calls at Vera Cruz to pick up food and provisions.

there is no evidence to indicate that they picked up any cargo other than normal food and provisions.

4. The only Bloc-flag ships in the Cuban trade which call routinely at Mexican ports are the Polish-flag ships that call at the Mexican ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz as part of the regular Polish liner service from Gdynia and Stettin to Mexico and Cuba. The calls at Mexican ports are nominally to load and discharge cargoes in the Polish-Mexican trade. It is possible that these ships could load cargoes in Mexico for Cuba.