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Poland Signs Aid Contracts With Cuba

Polish diplomats were reminded by US officials in January and February that under the Mutual Security Appropriations Act of 1961 the US will refuse to grant assistance to any country that provides economic or military aid to the Castro regime. At the same time the US asked for information which would confirm or deny reports that Poland plans to grant economic aid to Cuba.

Polish officials have made clear that they do not feel obligated to explain their trade with Cuba to the US, and have intimated that some regime leaders objected to the American questioning. Nevertheless, a deputy minister of foreign trade allowed US Embassy personnel in Warsaw to scrutinize commodity lists that purported to "explain" Poland's trade with Cuba. These lists, however, contained no information on the extent or terms of trade, and did not in fact constitute a reply to the American inquiry.

Both in Warsaw and Washington, Polish diplomats and trade representatives have attempted to confuse the issue by stressing that the extent of Polish trade with Cuba will be very small--some estimates ranging as low as \$1,000,000 annually. However, despite a record 1960 sugar beet crop, Poland has already contracted for the purchase of \$4,000,000 worth of Cuban sugar, and extensive negotiations are going on in other fields. An agreement was reached in December 1960 that Polish-Cuban trade for 1961 would total \$44,000,000. [REDACTED]

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