

11 August 1960

EXCLUDED FROM  
NOT RELEVANT  
TO CIA OFFICES

DEVELOPMENTS IN CUBA

There is new evidence of preparations for the delivery of bloc arms to Cuba. Two prominent officials from the Soviet Chief Engineering Directorate, Moscow's organization handling the supply of military goods to foreign countries, were noted recently in Havana. One of them, Sergeichik, is head of the directorate; the other, Yastrebov, is responsible for dispatching military cargoes from the Black Sea port of Nikolayev, where almost all Soviet arms shipments originate. Their task in Cuba probably was to arrange for military deliveries. Similar arrangements apparently were made earlier this year by Czechoslovakia, and a group of Cuban military trainees now may be in Prague for military instruction.

Neither Soviet nor Czech arms are known to have arrived in Cuba.

On 7 August, Fidel Castro launched the regime's sharpest anti-US attack to date in a speech announcing confiscation of further American properties. The tirade, delivered at the closing session of the Communist-dominated Latin American Youth Congress, constituted a frank appeal to the Latin American people over the heads of their governments. Castro boasted that neither the US, which he called "militarily second best," nor the "lackey foreign ministers" of the Organization of American States could halt Cuba's revolution and a hemisphere-wide "revolution against the Yankee colonial yoke."

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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

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The decree of 7 August under which most of the remaining US-owned property in Cuba was nationalized was the regime's most provocative anti-US act yet. Properties expropriated include the electric company, the telephone company, the oil refineries which already had been taken over, and all remaining sugar mills and lands. The total value of these properties is estimated at \$700,000,000. Physical seizure of the nationalized plants clearly was prearranged and was carried out immediately, often by elements of the "people's militia."

The promulgation on 9 August of a decree creating a "National Institute of Mining," which is to operate under the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) and control Cuban mineral production, may presage the seizure of US-owned mining interests, which were unaffected by the 7 August decree.

These extreme provocations suggest that the regime may even be trying to provoke US military intervention, in the belief this would enhance prospects for a Latin American revolution against "US imperialism."

The pastoral letter which was read in all Cuban Catholic churches on 7 August marks the end of the church's cautious position toward the regime. The letter vigorously attacked Communism and declared that the church is "profoundly disturbed by the fact that newspapermen, labor leaders, and even some government officials have re-

peatedly and enthusiastically eulogized the system of life" in Communist countries.

Response to the letter was varied. According to church sources, the letter was well received by a majority of congregations in the Havana area, although a number of pro-Castro Catholics allegedly left their churches when the letter was read, and fighting between pro- and anti-Castro elements is reported to have taken place in several areas following the services. The government-controlled press attacked the clergy for not having denounced the brutalities of the Batista regime and declared that if the church were to pit itself against the revolution, "the one who will lose will be the church."

Additional gatherings of Communists and Communist-front groups are scheduled, now that the youth congress is over. "Volunteers" from a number of countries, including most Sino-Soviet bloc nations, are arriving to participate--with many delegates to the congress who have remained in Cuba--in building a "school city" in the Sierra Maestra. Cuba's Popular Socialist (Communist) party is inviting foreign delegates to its eighth congress, which previously was planned for July but now apparently is to begin on 16 August. A congress of Communist parties of underdeveloped countries reportedly will be held in Cuba later this year.

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OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST

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PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

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