

## **January 1961**

# **Report to Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee (CPCz CC) on Consideration of Cuban Arms Requests**

### **Citation:**

"Report to Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee (CPCz CC) on Consideration of Cuban Arms Requests", January 1961, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Czech National Archives, Prague.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/115186>

### **Summary:**

The report concerns requests from Cuba for shipment of arms from Czechoslovakia, along with providing advisors to the Cuban military. Among the arms being transferred are Czechoslovak fighter planes, automatic rifles and ammunition, mobile artillery, and anti-aircraft guns. Clearly the Cuban desires for arms were fueled by fears of American attack, which would come to fruition in the 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion.

### **Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

### **Original Language:**

Czech

### **Contents:**

Translation - English

Report for the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party concerning the Interest of the Cuban Revolutionary Government in being supplied additional special Technology.

At the end of last year, the leading Cuban representatives, President [Osvaldo] Dorticos and Prime Minister Fidel Castro, expressed on various occasions their interest in being supplied with additional special technology and investment mechanisms, including appropriate technical assistance.

In a meeting on 16 December 1960 with the Czechoslovak Ambassador in Havana and in a letter dated 17 December 1960, President Dorticos asked the First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the President of the Republic, Comrade A. Novotný, for assistance with the construction of anti-aircraft defenses for the country against expected hostile air strikes.

The Cuban Revolutionary Government intends to counter this threat by developing a radiolocation network and by organizing anti-aircraft defenses. To this end, it plans to use anti-aircraft weapons supplied by Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. It wishes to purchase 5-6 fighter planes equipped with radiolocation mechanisms. At the same time, the Government expects Czechoslovakia to provide technical assistance and send a small group of specialists in order to organize anti-aircraft defenses and train 4-5 pilots to fly the supplied planes. During the process of supplying the special technology, it will also be necessary to train Cuban specialists to maintain and repair the supplied planes. Until the trainees return from Czechoslovakia, maintenance and repairs would be the responsibility of Czechoslovak specialists. Furthermore, it will be necessary to train Cuban specialists to use the radiolocation equipment.

On the same occasion, the Prime Minister requested that radio stations be supplied in order to ensure the command effectiveness of the armed forces (the army and militia) as well as other radio stations to secure communication between provincial commanders. Among his other requests, it is necessary to mention the previous request to be supplied with 50 million 7.92 millimeter bullets and 400,000 magazines for 52čs automatic rifles.

The commander of the Revolutionary Army's tactical forces, Commandante Guillermo Garcia, communicated a wish through the prime minister for the supply of two mobile artillery batteries for divisions and machine equipment for the development of a permanent army repair facility for artillery materials.

The main technical officials at the Ministry of Foreign Trade discussed supply possibilities with the Defense Ministry and the Machine Ministry. From the discussions, it became clear that the Czechoslovak side is able to supply the mobile artillery batteries for divisions from Defense Ministry stockpiles, the magazines for automatic rifles (100,000 in 1961 and 300,000 in 1962) and two million 7.92 millimeter bullets from Defense Ministry stockpiles. The issue of equipment for the army repair facility is in the process of being clarified.

In recognition of the fact that the urgent Cuban demands have not been fully satisfied, supply possibilities have been explored in the Soviet Union and the Bulgarian People's Republic.

On 30 December 1960, the Deputy Prime Minister, Comrade O. Šimůnek, informed the Soviet ambassador in Prague, Comrade Zimyanin, via a memorandum of President Dorticos' request and requested that the Soviet Government inform him if it could provide the requested special technology for anti-aircraft defense and for the security of the command structure of the armed forces (copy of the memorandum enclosed-Enclosure 4). A reply from Comrade Zimyanin was received by Deputy Prime

Minister, Comrade O. Šimůnek on 7 March. He mentioned that the Soviet Government had decided to fulfill the request of the Government of the Cuban Republic and, in addition to anti-aircraft defense, would provide resources for coastal defense. Considering the fact that Soviet arms shipments to Cuba are no longer a secret, the Soviet Government believes that it would be useful if further supplies to Cuba take place without the participation of Czechoslovak organs. By the same token, Soviet specialists will be sent directly to Cuba.

The Soviet Ambassador further informed that the Soviet Government, in harmony with the opinions of the Czechoslovak side, believes that it would be useful if specialists from the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic were sent to Cuba as soon as possible in order to assist in the organization of anti-aircraft defense for the country using the already supplied materials. As a significant portion of the resources for anti-aircraft defense have been and will be supplied by the Soviet Union, the Soviet side considers it appropriate to send its own group of specialists to Cuba who, in cooperation with the Czechoslovak specialists, would solve all problems surrounding anti-aircraft defense in Cuba.

It is clear from the above-mentioned facts that it will be possible to satisfy fully the new Cuban requests, including the sending of a small group of Czechoslovak specialists who, together with Soviet specialists, will formulate a plan for the organization of anti-aircraft defense in Cuba. The training of Cuban pilots, which will enable them to fly fighter planes, as well as that of specialists for their maintenance and specialists of other supplied equipment, will be provided by the Soviet Union.