

September 25, 1962

Report on meeting between the Mexican representative at the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Czechoslovak Ambassador in Washington about US-Cuban tensions over Guantanamo

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Summary:

According to the Director General and the Czechoslovak Ambassador, the tensions between the U.S. and Cuba stem mostly from the violation of Cuban airspace by airplanes coming from Guantanamo and that the American airplanes had fired machine guns over Cuban territory. The Czechoslovakian Ambassador also reported that the Cuban troops were "in trenches."

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SUBJECT: Information about the situation in Guantanamo
Mexico, D.F., 25 September 1962

MEMORANDUM

C. General Directorate of the Diplomatic Service
Building ['Edificio']

Considering it of interest to this General Directorate and your very honorable position, I am providing you with information here that our representative at the Council of the Organization of American States has just transmitted to this Secretariat [Ministry] about the information that the Czechoslovakian Ambassador to the White House entrusted him with about the situation that, as he conceives it, prevails on the North American naval base of Guantanamo:

1. - The Czechoslovakian Ambassador told Sánchez Gavito that in a recent visit to Cuba he had made an extensive tour "of the border" and that he could verify not only the violation of Cuban air space by airplanes coming from Guantanamo, but at the same time that the North American airplanes fired machine guns over Cuban territory.

2. - Without explaining the reason why this shooting continues, the Czechoslovakian Ambassador limited himself to reporting that Cuban troops are "in trenches" and that this is why until now they have not suffered any losses; he also assured, that the practice of shootings [descargas] continues, and that he fears that in one moment or another an extremely serious incident will occur.

3. - Equally the Czechoslovakian Ambassador expressed that it is very possible that Cuba will refer to this situation in its speeches during the seventeenth session of the United Nations General Assembly; that he is convinced that representatives of the UN could easily verify the aforementioned facts, and that, although he doubted that the Cuban government would take the step of asking for an inspection, it would be very useful to put an end to a situation which he described as extremely serious.

Furthermore, I permit myself to transcribe below a reflection that Ambassador Sánchez Gavito made about the source of the previous information:

"For the first time since I have occupied this position, the Czechoslovakian Ambassador to the United States government invited me to have lunch with him. He had offered this attention to different colleagues of mine and I remember that [his invitation to] Ambassador Sanz de Santamaría - who at that time represented Colombia at the Council - preceded the April invasion of Cuba last year by a few days. As I knew that on that occasion the aim of the invitation as I found out months later had been to assure the Colombian Ambassador that an invasion against Cuba was going to be launched, I accepted the invitation with the keenest possible interest, made greater because the topic of Cuba, during the last few weeks, attracts maximum attention in Washington."

Attentively,

ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL
Lic. María Emilia Téllez