

October 25, 1962

Cable no. 323 from the Czechoslovak Embassy in Havana (Pavlíček)

Citation:

"Cable no. 323 from the Czechoslovak Embassy in Havana (Pavlíček)", October 25, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, National Archive, Archive of the CC CPCz, (Prague); File: "Antonín Novotný, Kuba," Box 122.
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Summary:

The cable states Cuba has alerted its armed forces to maximum combat readiness. Cuba's government had already taken the precautions of arresting known counterrevolutionaries in all aspects of society, with all important factors monitored. General aura of the country is one of tenseness, but the people continue about their lives as normal. There is a sense of strong revolutionary unity in the wake of this blockade, especially after a speech given by Castro. Cable concludes with a message that the first Soviet ship arrived on the basis of not carrying any military hardware.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Czech

Contents:

Translation - English

Telegram from Havana File # 10896

Arrived: 25.10.62 21:20

Processed: 25.10.62 24:00 Office of the President, G, Ku, 6

Dispatched: 26.10.62 06:20

NEWSFLASH!

On the basis of information from the Soviet friends and our own in Washington, the Cubans have further expanded their battle preparedness and are now at maximum readiness. They evacuated some hospitals where the cases of the ill allowed, and increased security measures. They arrested a number of counterrevolutionary elements and all institutions, factories, and important objects are constantly under guard. Judging from the situation in Havana as well as in the provinces, the country is calm, although understandably nervous. People are not buying up goods, there is no panic-on the contrary, everything is working respectably and calmly. As a result of the increased danger, the industrial manufacturing sector is working better, though with understandably insufficient supplies of raw materials and in some places, insufficient numbers of workers. The labor unions, women, and youth are all helping the KRV [Cuban Revolutionary Front] very efficiently. The revolutionary unity is strong; there are no traces of sabotage or organized internal opposition that would have to be crushed. There was an even greater solidarity after Fidel [Castro]'s speech. Talks reveal a concern about whether it will be possible to secure a delivery of fuel and food supplies, both of which are in weak supply, in some places only enough to last 3-to-5 weeks. There are concerns about a possible invasion of mercenaries, concealed and supported by the blockade, and an attack on Guantanamo. The one-sided support of Latin American countries for [US President John] Kennedy supports these concerns. On the other hand, determination prevails, as does the need to oppose the USA or the mercenaries. The first Soviet ship has just arrived, allowed through based on the response that it is not carrying any military materials.

Pavlíček 323