

October 27, 1962

Report to CPCz General Secretary Antonin Novotný

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Summary:

The report to Novotny details the happenings of the Cuban Missile Crisis at that time. Great Britain feels out of the loop and hurt by not being consulted by the United States before it took action, while Kennedy is not backing down on the blockade until the missiles are removed. According to the message, it is unclear whether there are nuclear missiles in Cuba at all; an American army colonel admits to the UN that no traces have been found, despite hundreds of photographs taken. In Czechoslovakia, the situation is unchanged; troops are still on alert and awaiting combat orders, with morale running high. There are even some volunteers willing to go to Cuba and aid their Latin comrades.

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Top Secret

Report for Comrade Novotný

During the night there was no significant change in the military-political situation.

According to information from the Ministry of the Interior, [US President John F.] Kennedy offered [British Prime Minister Harold] Macmillan to arrange for mutual telephone contact for the purpose of exchanging opinions during the course of the next few days. The position of Macmillan on this proposal is not known.

In military circles in Great Britain indignation is being expressed that the government of the USA did not discuss its actions in the Caribbean area with its allies in NATO, namely with Great Britain. It has been confirmed that the armed forces of Great Britain are not participating through any measures in the current military-political situation.

The government of the USA is interested in not raising the slightest doubt about its determination to attain its goal. In the [UN] Security Council it presented the aerial photos of 4 missile bases and one airfield for jet airplanes in Cuba. In commenting on the submitted photos, an American army colonel had to admit that so far no atomic weapons had been found. Stevenson expressed the idea that he would go with a Cuban representative to Cuba to carry out an inspection of the bases.

President Kennedy has supposedly decided to call a special session of Congress to discuss the situation in Cuba in regard to alleged continued construction of missile bases.

On the evening of 26.10 [26 October] an official statement was released in which it comes to light that the USA is assuming the right to take further steps if construction continues on guided missile bases, which are being labeled as the main cause of the current crisis. Military circles continue to be fed reports of a possible invasion, preparations for which are linked to the continuing concentration of forces in the Caribbean area.

With the feeling that so far no positive result has been obtained in arranging talks between representatives of the USSR, USA, and Cuba, and the official statement of the USA, the situation among diplomatic circles in the UN on the evening of 26.10 [26 October] was described as deteriorating.

The American ambassador in Vienna has assured the Austrian government that there is no immediate danger of war. He advised the Austrian government to avoid statements that might endanger their neutrality.

The Presidium of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) discussed the issue of Berlin at their meeting of yesterday, and expressed the opinion that at the beginning of November a restoking of the Berlin crisis can be expected.

The situation in the Cs. [Czechoslovak] armed forces is unchanged. Troops are undergoing intensive training according to adjusted plans. Staffs are verifying the accomplishment of assigned measures, and are implementing steps to increase coordination.

Evidence has been discovered of a deliberate impairment of the combat readiness of a MIG-15 plane that members of the headquarters of the 7th Army use for training. A scrap of paper had been inserted into the gun sight, preventing effective fire from the on-board weapons. The perpetrator has so far not been identified.

The state of political morale in the armed forces of the CSSR is still good. The current situation is spurring the majority of members of the army and Interior Ministry troops to more active and responsible activity in the accomplishment of duties. Commitments to more rapid training of recruits and reservists are being adopted. Cases are spreading of non-party army members requesting acceptance as candidate members of the CPCz. Inquiries on the possibilities of recruiting volunteers to go to Cuba are increasing.

Measures for supply of the population are being positively received, and it is reported that the wave of panic buying in stores has subsided in most instances.

Isolated cases of indiscipline are also being reported, such as absence without leave, and failure to report for duty. During the course of yesterday there occurred a desertion of two privates on basic service from military troop 8008 Plzeň. The motive for desertion was probably one of the soldiers' having been referred to the military prosecutor for failure to obey orders. The search for both of these deserters is being carried out by Public Security.

On 26.10.1962 [26 October 1962], 15 soldiers at a technical vocational school (where the officer corps is trained to serve anti-aircraft rockets) were found listening to a broadcast of Radio Free Europe in the Hungarian language, which was translated by one of the listeners. The report spoke of the border conflict between India and China.

Similarly, in the 2nd company of the Cheb brigade of the Border Guards, several members listened to West Berlin station Rias on a transistor receiver.

A private of the 151st engineer regiment was found taking 200 grenades off base. The case is being investigated.

In the area of Hradiště exercise range yesterday afternoon, a foreigner on a visa, Arthur Roger Henrichs, who is an American citizen, was apprehended while photographing the area. He was identified, and his photo apparatus was confiscated.

Among the citizens, increased interest is being shown in training in national preparation for Civil Defense II level. For example in the Přešov district, participation in training has risen from 40% to 90%.

A number of cases have occurred of reserve soldiers and officers requesting recall to active duty. Military district officials report increased registration discipline.

The political authorities of the 2nd army district warn that in the areas of Bruntál, Šumperk, Hlučina, and Odry, members of the German ethnicity are becoming active.

[Signature]