

October 28, 1962

Report to CPCz General Secretary Antonin Novotný

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Summary:

Further reports from Pavlicek indicate despite soft rhetoric from the United States indicating a willing to negotiate, aggressive preparations against Cuba continued. In particular, there was a large reinforcement of air force bases in Florida and Key West, as well as an announcement of increased intensity of air reconnaissance over Cuba. By the time of this message, there already have been exchanges between Cuban anti-aircraft guns and U-2 recon planes. However, there are no significant measures observed among military installations in Europe, with Czechoslovak troops maintaining maximum combat readiness. Very few instances of insubordination and dissent are found.

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Information for Comrade Novotný

During 28 October no significant changes occurred in the military-political situation.

In spite of the White House statement in which there are indications of willingness on the part of the USA to negotiate a resolution to the current crisis, aggressive preparations against Cuba continued overnight. Especially ongoing were the reinforcement and concentration of American ground and air forces in Florida and on the base in Key West, where Hawk anti-aircraft missile batteries are also deployed. The American government has officially proclaimed that the intensity of air force reconnaissance over Cuba will be increased, while American planes will destroy anti-aircraft facilities that attempt to defend Cuban airspace.

It has been learned that a light armored regiment from the strategic corps at Fort Meade, Maryland is at combat readiness and is prepared to move from the base. The American Defense Ministry has called 24 transport planes of the Air National Guard to active duty.

According to information from General Headquarters of the Ministry of National Defense, on 27.10.1962 [27 October 1962] at 16:00 h our time a Cuban anti-aircraft battery shot down an American U-2 reconnaissance plane about 20 km from Guantanamo. At 16:17 h a group of American planes penetrated to above Pinar del Rio province, and were repelled by anti-aircraft artillery.

In Nicaragua, Panama, Guatemala, and other countries, exile intervention units are at the ready. Increased readiness has been observed at the Canadian Defense Ministry, where 50% of officers were at their stations during the night. Preparations for other measures toward heightened combat readiness has been observed in Italy. On 27.10. [27 October] police were put on alert in Rome, and instructed that possible internal unrest should be expected, especially in the event of mobilization. The mood among the ranks of the Italian police and army is strongly anti-American.

Among troops deployed on the Central European theater, no further extraordinary measures have been observed. Stand-by patrols by American strategic B-52 airplanes continue in the Mediterranean area at the rate of 48 flights per day.

During the night continuing preparations were discovered to destroy routes of communications in the area of Ludwigsthal. Civil defense exercises were held in the area of the eastern Schönsee at 22.30 h.

□The situation in the Cs. [Czechoslovak] armed forces is unchanged.

Troops continue to train for increased combat readiness. Repairs to equipment are being rapidly completed.

The commander of the 4th Army has relieved the commander of the 4th Antiaircraft Detachment, Lt. Colonel Havider, for irresponsible attitude and failure to fulfill combat readiness tasks. In the same army, during a relocation of the 9th Mechanized Infantry regiment, there were motor breakdowns of some automobiles - the fault of recruit drivers.

The state of political morale in the armed forces continues to be good. The message from Cde. [Soviet Premier Nikita S.] Khrushchev to President Kennedy has become the focus of attention. In the Cz. [Czechoslovak] People's Army and the troops of the Interior Ministry, mass radio listening has been arranged for, and reports and meetings have been held. The response of all members has been very positive.

During these political events interest was shown on other questions; especially anticipated is what position will be adopted on the Soviet position by Turkey and the USA.

Political activity continues to be pursued among the units, exhibiting results in the exemplary fulfillment of tasks and the adoption of commitments. Combat readiness is maintained at a high level. Preparations for the swearing-in ceremony of 1st year recruits were taken advantage of to explain the current international situation and the necessity for high combat readiness. In several units the ceremony has already taken place; in others it will take place today. The clarification of the meaning and sense of the oath has a very positive effect on the soldiers at this time. An equally positive impact is had by the speeches of representatives of local government organs, sponsor factories, and the participation of parents. Commitments to quality and timely fulfillment of tasks are adopted then and there at the assembly under the impression created by the oath-taking. From the ceremonial assemblies and meetings, greetings are sent to the district conferences of the CPCz in which soldiers assure the delegates that they will fulfill their assigned tasks.

Among the troops of the Interior Ministry - in the Internal Guard since the last report, 30 new collective and 333 individual commitments have been adopted relating to guard duty, heightening of combat readiness, attainment of the "Model Collective" award, fuel conservation, etc.

In regard to the statement by Cde. Khrushchev, some members have expressed the opinion that tensions have been further decreasing, and that it will no longer be necessary to observe all measures for maintaining combat readiness.

In the Blansko RMZ [Regional Military Zone] there was a gross breach of discipline by two officers, Major Koš, a former member of the government troops, and 1st Lieutenant Kriš, who had been released to the reserves in 1950 and reactivated. The above-named expressed unwillingness to obey an order of the chief of the RMZ. The case is being investigated by the head of the Regional Military Authority and the RMA Political Department.

In the 4th Tank Division, listening to Radio Free Europe was discovered in the political education office. The commander of the army and the chief of political administration have taken the appropriate measures.

A drop has occurred in the increased buying within the territory of Prague. Buying continues near bus and train stations, where citizens from the country do their shopping.

Much buying has been observed on the Malá Strana as well, and diplomatic personnel are especially involved in this. Also the Dům potravin [Food Store] delivery service has recorded increased purchases by the embassies of foreign states. The increased purchasing tendencies continue within the Prague 5 district as well.

In the West Bohemia region there is constant demand for sugar, salt, butter, and flour. Cases have been discovered where citizens that have a vehicle are traveling to shop in neighboring regions. In Plzeň itself there is a great demand for salt. It is being said there that salt is a good protection against exposure to radiation.

Despite a certain drop, increased purchasing is being reported in other regions of the republic as well.

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