

October 25, 1962

Danish Defense Intelligence Service Weekly Brief (Excerpts)

Citation:

"Danish Defense Intelligence Service Weekly Brief (Excerpts)", October 25, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Danish State Archive, Copenhagen, Archives of the Danish Defense Intelligence Service. Translated for CWIHP by Henrik Brandt.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/115401>

Summary:

An intelligence report from the Danish Defense Intelligence Services providing a general background on the historical events in Cuba leading up to the Cuban Missile Crisis (Castro's revolutionary government), the defense systems and readiness of Cuba and its closest allies and military aid and materials in Cuba.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Danish

Contents:

Translation - English

Danish Defense Intelligence Service

Weekly Brief
25 October 1962

[excerpts]

Political

World-political activities of the Eastern Bloc: The first days in the reported period proceeded "normally" and without any important derivations from the usual foreign-political routine. President Kennedy's speech on the night between 22 and 23 October [i.e., 7 p.m., Washington time, after midnight, European time - ed.] did not provoke any immediate reaction from the Eastern Bloc; the content was briefly mentioned in the early hours the following day and only a couple of comments were added. It was not until Tuesday, [23 October,] 14.00 hours Danish time, that the Soviet Government released a lengthy statement, which was subsequently broadcast every hour on Moscow radio and later in the people's-democratic radio-stations. The statement was characterized by general phrases without any concrete counter-propositions and ended with the words "The Soviet Union will take the necessary precautions in order to give a proper answer to the actions of the aggressors." What these "necessary precautions" actually entail is unknown. However, the Soviet Union has on its own accord asked the UN Security Council to take up the issue, which could possibly be interpreted as a wish for negotiations. It is however too early to say anything concrete about the attitude of the Eastern Bloc. The willingness to "mediate" in the conflict between India and China could possibly be seen as a sign that Moscow, under the prevailing conditions, wishes to avoid any warlike complications. Concerning developments in US-Cuban relation, see below. (Finished Wednesday the 24 [of October], 03.10 pm.)

(...)

Cuba, the chronological political development since 1959. The following is a description of the political developments in Cuba since 1959, to serve as a background for the events which have recently occurred in Cuba:

On the 26th of July [1953,] the 27-year old lawyer Fidel Castro leads a revolt against the dictatorial regime of Batista. The revolt fails and Castro and his followers are sentenced to 15 years of forced labour. He is already pardoned in 1955, after which he and a group of followers flee to Mexico. Here he founds the revolutionary "26th of July Movement." Approximately one year later (in December 1956), Fidel Castro along with his brother Raul and 80 of their supporters, land illegally in Cuba, where they establish a partisan unit. This partisan unit fights with increasing success against the Batista regime. At first the Communists denounced the "26th of July Movement," calling them a "bourgeoisie movement," but when the Batista regime began to show signs of weakness under the pressure from the Castro-partisans, they decided to approach the "26th of July Movement."

On the 1st of January, [1959,] Batista flees; Castro appoints Dr. Manuel Urrutia as President and takes control of the armed forces himself. The Communists have in the meantime occupied the key positions in the trade-unions in Havana, and their party, "The Popular Socialist Party [PSP]," becomes the only party to be officially allowed next to "26th of July Movement." Communists, who had fled abroad during the Batista regime, returned home and with the help from the trade-unions they are given leading positions in Havana. These returned emigrants support Castro, but without any enthusiasm for his movement; they wish to be able to act independently. Castro himself declared in an interview, that "...the "26th of July Movement" is a radical, but

not Communist movement...." And three months later, in April 1959, he adds in a TV interview that "...if there by chance should be any Communists in my government, there is exactly zero..."

This open non-communist tendency in the Castro movement continues, although several original Castro supporters claim that the "26th of July Movement" is slowly being infiltrated by Communists. Thus Castro's former partisan-comrade and chief of the air-force flee in July 1959 in protest against the communist infiltration, and for the same reasons President Urrutia is forced to abdicate, with [Osvaldo] Dorticos becoming the new President. The Communists ("Popular Socialist Party") is now under the leadership of the general secretary Blas Roca, who in August 1959 in the international communist organ "Problems of Peace and Socialism" announces a hard communist line on Cuba.

In the meantime the relations between the USA and Cuba are deteriorating on a monthly basis. In June 1959 a land-reform is adopted, which heralds the confiscation of all American-owned land without compensation. The United States protests; Cuba responds by claiming that the United States is supporting an anti-Castro-revolution. In February 1960 [Anastas] Mikoyan arrives in Cuba in order to open a Soviet exhibition. At the same time a credit and trade deal is made (mostly Soviet oil for Cuban sugar). In May 1960, some months after Mikoyan's visit, Cuba re-establishes diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, which had been severed in 1952, and at the same time a Cuban ring of control is established around the American naval base at Guantanamo (leased for 99 years by the USA in 1903). The United States proclaims the suspension of all economic aid, which is countered [by the Cubans] with the confiscation of all American hotels and oil companies in June 1960.

Coinciding with the break between the United States and Cuba, the [Cuban] relationship with the Soviet Union is strengthened, which among other things manifests itself in Khrushchev's words on the 9th of July 1960:

"...we (the Soviet Union) will do anything to support Cuba in its struggle. More plainly said, the Soviet artillerists can if necessary come to Cuba's aid with rockets..."

On 21 September 1960, Castro meets Khrushchev during the UN general [assembly] summit in New York, and one month later the Soviet deliveries of weapons begin. The United States begins an embargo against Cuba. In December the same year, a Soviet-Cuban agreement is made concerning expanded trade and increased technical aid. At the same time, all remaining non-communist elements are removed from the trade unions. In January 1961 Castro demands a drastic reduction of the American embassy personnel, which is in turn answered by the United States with the cutting of all diplomatic connections. (Eisenhower: "There are limits to what Americans can endure....") On the 1st of February, Castro among other things declares:

"initially we mistrusted the communists... but later we learned to know each other and to understand each other and began to work together..."

To this, President Kennedy replied on the 3rd of April by describing Cuba as a dangerous bridgehead for international communism. On the 17th [of April 1961] the "invasion" (Bay of Pigs) begins. But it collapses on the 20th.

In May that same year during a victory parade, Castro proclaims Cuba to be a socialist state, and the country is mentioned in the communist may-paroles immediately after the list of people's-democracies, as a state on its way toward socialism. Subsequently, the establishment of a totalitarian regime is begun. The communists along with the "26th of July Movement" create a unified party, and Castro professes himself to Communism:

"I am a Marxist-Leninist and shall remain as such to my death", he declared on 1st of

December 1961.

Subsequently, action and counteraction rapidly follow one another. On the 22nd of January [1962], on the suggestion of the USA, the Organization of American States (OAS) in Punta del Este (Uruguay) adopts a resolution (the original suggestion had been severely limited), which said that a profession to Marxist-Leninism was irreconcilable with the inter-American system. On the 4th of February, President Kennedy broadcast the provisions for the import and export embargo of Cuba-excluding medical supplies. On the 7th of March the communist Enrique Lister becomes the military adviser for Castro, following the takeover of the land-reform by another communist (Rodriguez) a couple of days earlier. On the 9th March, a politburo is established for the unified party (the communists and the 26th of July Movement was unified to a single party in August 1961), consisting of 25 persons, including 10 professed communists. These try to take power from the inside, pushing Castro in the background. He fights back, after which [Anibal] Escalante, the general secretary for the unified party, flees to Czechoslovakia on the 26th of March. Castro calls Escalante a leftist sectarian. Moscow and Peking approve of Castro's steps 14 days later.

On the 2nd of July, Raoul [Raúl] Castro travels to Moscow where he obtains the commitment of increased military aid, after which an agreement is signed on the 2nd of September for the delivery of weapons and military instructors. This is regarded by the United States as a threat, and President Kennedy is given the authority to call in 150,000 reservists in case of a crisis. This is perceived as a war-threat by the Soviet Union, and it is added that an attack on Cuba will be answered by the Soviet Union with, among other things, a counter-attack with rockets. On the 20th of September, Congress gives Kennedy the authority to use military force against Cuba. Subsequently, the Soviet Union signs a "fishery-agreement" with Cuba on the 25th of September. The agreement includes the construction of a Soviet fishery harbor in Cuba.

The decision to establish a Soviet "fishery-base" on Cuba provoke a strong reaction in the United States. During his campaign for re-election [sic; actually the mid-term Congressional elections-ed.], President Kennedy is repeatedly urged to "act" and is accused of being "soft" on the Cuban issue. The American request to the Western merchant shipping companies not to ship weapons to Cuba, is referred to in the Soviet press as "anti-Cuban hysteria," and [the Soviets] repeatedly threaten that "an attack on Cuba will mean a world war with nuclear weapons."

Other similar declarations followed, and it is underlined that the fishery harbor, which is supposed to lay in Havana, "has no military purpose." The foreign minister of the Soviet Union, [Andrei] Gromyko, assures President Kennedy during their talks on the 17th [actually 18th-ed.] that the Soviet weapons deliveries only consist of weapons for self-defense. This assurance apparently prompts the President's National Security Advisor, [McGeorge] Bundy, to declare on a television-broadcast, that the military deliveries from the Soviet Union presented no immediate threat against the United States.

However, it is apparent in Kennedy's speech on the 22nd, that after receiving new intelligence about the Soviet deliveries and "technicians," the United States regards Gromyko's assurance as "untrue." It is therefore decided to take precautions, as President Kennedy said in his speech. The new developments are at the current time (the 24th, 03:00 PM) very unclear and vague, and the world press is furthermore shedding light on it from all angles, so that one can only get the background information from these sources.

[...]

ARMY

A. □SOVIET UNION.

Extension of service-time and cancellation of leave.

SISC no 170 N □Confidential

Minister of Defence, marshal [Rodion] MALINOVSKIY, issued the order on the 23rd of October 1962 to cancel all leave for the armed forces. Furthermore, the impending returning home of the personnel of the rocket forces, the air defence and submarine fleet is suspended. These measures are done as a quick response to the American actions around Cuba.

It is therefore not a case of a general extension of the service-time of the armed forces; it only concerns the forces which - also under normal circumstances - are under maximum readiness.

Thus, it seems that the demobilization order issued by the Minister of Defence on the 7th of September 1962 is still standing for all other personnel of the armed forces.

B. □WARSAW PACT

Readiness.

SISC no 222 M/C

Confidential

Simultaneously with the above-mentioned order from the Soviet Minister of Defense, the chief of the Warsaw-Pact unified command, Marshal [Andrei] GRECHKO, gave the order to increase the level of readiness for all Warsaw Pact forces.

The increased state of readiness can be seen as a result of the increased readiness of the American forces.

There has to date (24 October, 06:00 PM) not been seen any special activity among the Soviet forces in East Germany and Poland, nor from any of the satellite states. A heightened state of readiness has been seen before during periods of political tension. It is also seen implemented during the conduct of a major NATO-military maneuver.

CUBA'S MILITARY STRENGTH

□SISC no 200 12E □Confidential

□See appendix 1 to this paper.

[...]

C. Miscellaneous.

1. In UO [Uge-Oversigt-Weekly Brief].41/[19]62 a delivery of 12 missile motorboats to Cuba is noted. It can now be established with certainty that these boats have been delivered from the BALTIC SEA area. The boats were carefully covered. It has hitherto been established that the boats were built at the PETROVSKIJ shipyard in Leningrad at a fairly limited pace.

It is worth noting, that CUBA is the first country outside of the Soviet Union, which has

received this type of boats. Before, the SOVIET UNION, Northern Fleet, delivered patrol-craft of the KRONSTADT-class and MTBs of the P-6 class.

2. On 22 October, the Soviet merchant-ship KRASNOGRAD passed out through Danish waters, carrying about 12 vehicles on its deck, en route to CUBA. On 24 October the same ship passed back through into the BALTIC SEA via STOREBÆLT, carrying the same cargo on its decks.

As this ship has been sailing for a longer period from the BALTIC SEA to CUBA, and as it seems that the voyage went normally without any incident or accidents, the ship's return can be connected to the situation around CUBA.

[...]

REVIEW OF CUBA'S MILITARY FORCES

(Time: October 1962)

DEFENSE SYSTEM

1. Defensive Alliances.

No direct defense alliances with the Soviet Union or any other country, but agreements of weapons-deliveries and military advisors with the Soviet Union, China, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany.

Base of recruiting

Army: [] []

Navy: [] [] recruiting.

Air force: []

Militia: [] "Volunteer" arming of men and women (workers, students and peasants).

Division of the Armed Forces

Army and militia.

Navy.

Air force.

Defense Leadership

FIDEL CASTRO's brother, RAOUL [RAUL] CASTRO, is chief of the Cuban armed forces.

Military aid from other countries.

August 1960: CZECHOSLOVAKIA delivers rifles.

June 1961: Combined communist weapons aid is estimated to be about \$100,000,000.

January 1962: Combined communist weapons aid is estimated to be about \$175,000,000.

September 1962: Combined communist weapons aid is estimated to be about \$225,000,000.

The 64-year old Soviet-General ENRIQUE LISTER (LISTYTSIN), known from the Civil War in Spain (commander of "The International Brigade"), has from 10/3 [10 March] 1962 been on CUBA as leader of the EAST-military missions (is mentioned as the leader of the entire CUBAN defence).

Furthermore, the Soviet-General ALBERTO BAY (trained in MEXICO as part of

CASTRO's original small guerrilla-force) is on CUBA.

USSR-technicians on CUBA, 5000-6000 (among these are probably also other personnel than technicians).

USSR-military mission ()

East German-military mission)

Czech-military mission () on CUBA.

Chinese-military mission ()

ARMY.

1. Strength.

a. Peacetime forces.

38,000 (1961) in the regular army, including police.

(Ca. 6,000).

b. National Guard and paramilitary forces.

Militia: 8,000 in 1959,

250,000 in 1961, made up of students, peasants and workers (men and women).

Materiel.

A lot of American materiel exists from before the revolution.

65,000 new Belgian FN-rifles.

125,000 Czech automatic weapons,

(including CZR semi-automatic rifles with folding bayonet, ZB.R-2.30 calibre.)

75 T-34 tanks (Soviet)

25 JS-2 (-3) tanks (Soviet)

100 T-54 tanks (Soviet) with infra-red battle and driving equipment.

100 mm cannons (Soviet)

Armored personnel-carriers (Soviet)

Light artillery, 85 mm, cannon (Eastern Bloc)

Heavy artillery, 155 mm, self-propelled cannon (60 km/H).

Multiple barrel rocket launchers (Soviet).

1,000 pieces of field artillery.

Vehicles of the jeep type.

Radar-equipment (Eastern Bloc)

Signal-equipment (Eastern Bloc)

2,000 Anti Aircraft Artillery (30-40 mm-SKODA)

Czech ZPU-4 LVMG in quad mounting.

12 batteries of Soviet SA-2 anti aircraft missiles (Guideline), (radar corrected-altitude 60,000 feet, distance 40-50 km, angle of impact 30°).

Training.

80,000 soldiers (and militia?) have received two months of training and discipline with the help of Czech, Russian, East German, and Chinese military advisers.

All soldiers are equipped with automatic weapons.

Order of Battle.

2 Air defense missile batteries, SA-2:

1 Battery (with 6 launching ramps) (operational) in BAHIA HONDA 70 km West of

HAVANA.

□□1 Battery (with 6 launching ramps) (under construction) 100 km East of HAVANA in MATANZAS.

□ Anti aircraft batteries on the PINE-islands [Isle of Pines-ed.].

Miscellaneous

Many of the 5-6,000 Soviet technicians have manned the radar-installations for the SA-2 missiles.

Other Russians are manning the large radar-installations, from which they can "eavesdrop" on Cape Canaveral. It is also from here [that] Soviet cosmonauts are directed.

Czech ZPU-4 LVMG in quad mountings are positioned around the Soviet camps.

NAVY.

Strength. (in 1961)

□ 380 officers

□ 220 NCO's

□ 5,000 men.

Materiel.

Frigate "CUBA" (is mentioned as a cruiser) launched in 1911 in the United States, modernized in 1936-37 and 1956.

Frigate "ANTONIO MACEO" □ ex. USN PF-type

□ -'- "JOSE MARTI" □--

□ -'- "MAXIMO GOMEZ" □-

Patrol-escort craft "CARIBE" □ ex. USN PCE-type

□ -'- "SIBONEY" □□--

Patrol-vessel "BAIRE" □□□ ex USN PC-type (anti-submarine)

4 coastguard-motorboats "HABANA", "LAS VILLAS", "ORICUBA", "PINAR DEL RIO".

1 coastguard-motorboat "LEONICIO PRADO"

Auxiliary coastguard-motorboats "DONATIVO", "MATANZAS"

Motorboats "R 41", "R42", "R43" □□ ex. USN motortorpedoboats.

Auxiliary patrol-vessels "SV 7", "-8", "-9", "-10", "-12", "-14" and SV 1, -2, -3, -4, -5 and -6.

Auxiliary craft "GRANNA"

10 rescue-vessels.

CUBA has furthermore received a number of Soviet motor-torpedo-boats of the KOMAR-class (the figure 100 has been mentioned, but that is impossible-10 is the more likely amount of vessels). It is possible that CUBA in 1961 received two Soviet destroyers, for the time being crewed by Russians, until a Cuban crew has been trained. The two destroyers might be a mistake, however, and it could just be two coastal patrol vessels.

Combat strength.

□ The Navy might be unreliable, since it was not put into action during the rebel invasion in 1961.

Bases.

□Frigate observed in MARIEL in may 1962. Fleet academy in MARIEL.

Miscellaneous

□Agreement with POLAND for deliveries.

□1960-a number of motor-torpedo-boats

□□-'- minesweepers

□□-'- coastal vessels

□1961-a floating dry-dock.

□If any of these deliveries has ever arrived in CUBA is unknown.

AIR FORCE.

Strength.

□Ca. 200 pilots

Materiel.

□25 □MIG-15

□45 □MIG-17

□20 □Supersonic MIG-19

□25-30 MIG-21

□24 □MI-4 helicopters

□20 □AN-2 air-planes

□8 □IL transport-planes

Training.

□The Ca. 200 pilots are trained in Czechoslovakia.

Morale.

□In 1961, a few air force officers helped the rebel forces, as they took off from CUBA, bombed CUBAN ammunition depots, and then landed in the USA.

Bases.

□San Antonio de Los Banos (air force)

□Havana/Campo/Columbia

□Mariel (Naval air-planes)

□Mendoza/San Julian (air force)

□Camaguey (civilian)

□Santiago de Cuba (air force/civilian)

□Varadero (civilian/air force).

□

There is furthermore the airfield at PLAYO SALADO (possibly one of the above mentioned, which has its location only roughly mentioned.). In May 1962, work on the lengthening of the take-off strips [runways] was observed.

OVERVIEW OF SOVIET PERSONNEL ON CUBA

□Locality□□□□□Number - type - occupation

BAHIA HONDA □ A group of technicians, who have manned the radar of the air defense missile-battery. (arrived on the Soviet ship MS "KHABAROVSK").

SAN JULIAN □ □ □ □ 400 men with 35 pieces of heavy guns.

QUIEBRA HACHA

(East of CANABAS) □

2,000 men in a Soviet military base.

DEL CANO

(South of HAVANA) □

3,500 soldiers and technicians in the old reformatory at TORRENS.

MATANZAS-province □ □

Probably 3,000 men.

CLIMONAR and near the coast

at RIO CAMINAR

LAS VILLAS-province □ □

1,000 men

CASILDA harbor □

NB. The number of the personnel might be too high (most of the information is not confirmed).