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CUBAN COMMS

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COMINT REPORT

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2/6- R66-63
29 Nov 63 2103Z
DIST: O/WQ
ST 011, 021, 051,
101, 255, 401

STATUS OF CUBAN/SOVIET COMMUNICATIONS AS OF 29 NOVEMBER 1963PART I A: SOVIET MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND HAVANA

The Soviet Ministry of Defense-subordinated link "b" between Moscow and Havana continues to be active in both Morse and radio-printer scrambler as late as 28 November 1963. Operator chatter sent in reverse order again was noted on 20 November. The last time this chatter was observed was on 15 October.

PART I B: SOVIET COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN CUBA

Since 12 November 1963 three known attempts to break in on Soviet/Cuban communications activities have been noted. The first attempt was made on the Air Defense link between Limonar and a terminal suspected of being in the San Julian area. On that occasion, an activity utilizing the callsign NOC contacted one of the Soviet operators and queried him as to his location and whether there was any traffic for him. A conversation of approximately 10 minutes ensued, containing repeated queries as to the location of the Soviet station, before the Soviet operator terminated the schedule.

Later the same day a possible second attempt of the same type was made. This time, the link interrupted was the Air Defense link between Limonar and Sagua la Grande, and the unidentified activity used the callsign NSS. Again the Soviet terminated the conversation without divulging any information as to his whereabouts.

On 15 November, an attempt was made by an unidentified activity to portray itself as net control of the Soviet Naval network in Cuba. At 2102Z the station made a collective call utilizing the correct signals for the day. However, the attempt was abortive as a result of the rather poor simulation of Soviet procedure. Minutes after the attempt the control of the Soviet naval net sent a warning to the other stations: "some other station is working with our callsigns."

News of the death of President KENNEDY was noted on the Naval net on 23 November. Operator chatter messages were noted which asked for details of the assassination. The only details mentioned were that "Yesterday in Dallas he was shot by a sniper with a large calibre (rifle) [X]. . . Mortally wounded JOHN KENNEDY. He died."

During the past week nine Soviet Forces Cuba HF links used scrambler. They were as follows: the two subordinated links with both terminals in the Havana area, the unsubordinated link

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between the Havana-Volguin areas, the new Air Defense-associated link between the Havana and Camaguey areas, the Limonar-Pinar del Rio and Sagua la Grande links of the Western Sector Weapons Control Group and the Camaguey-Victoria de las Tunas and Santiago de Cuba areas of the Eastern Sector Weapons Control Group, and a new

was first heard 21 and 22-23 November. [redacted]
This new link is unidentified. Soviet activity was noted as late as 23 November on Cuban [redacted] facilities and [redacted] 27 November on Soviet [redacted] facilities.

PART I C: SOVIET AIR AND AIR DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS

The subscriber to the Soviet Forces Cuba (SFC) Western Sector Weapons Control group located at San Antonio de los Baños continues to be inactive in HF Morse communications as of 27 November. The station was last noted active on 15 October 1963. It is possible that the air defense-associated link between [redacted]

[redacted] communications were noted on the link [redacted]

All three of the subscribers to the Eastern Sector Weapons Control Group reappeared in HF Morse communications on 21 November 1963. The stations at Santiago de Cuba, Victoria de las Tunas, and an unrecovered location had not been heard in HF Morse communications since 23 October, 01 November, and 06 November, respectively. No explanation can be offered at this time for these periods of Morse inactivity.

The Soviet Forces Cuba radar reporting groups continue to use the Cuban low level cipher system (see 2/0 [redacted] R203-63) as of 27 November 1963, as in the past. [redacted]

Conversations on Soviet VHF multichannel (R-401) radio relay facilities on 11 November 1963 between SAM regimental headquarters at Victoria de las Tunas and a subordinate SAM site at Los Angeles revealed that some Soviet SAM personnel would arrive in Cuba about 20 November aboard a vessel which departed Leningrad on 05 November. There was no reference to the total number of personnel arriving; however, the speaker at the regiment indicated that he knew two of the individuals who were arriving. The names of the individuals have not been previously observed in Soviet SAM communications in Cuba.

A conversation on 08 October 1963 between probable SAM regimental headquarters at Santiago de las Vegas and a subordinate SAM site at Sigüenza Airfield contained a reference to Mexico. The speaker at the regiment stated "M. YURKA" (further unidentified) is arriving in a few days, huh? YURKA. You know, YURKA? Well . . . they are (IC) together with him to Mexico, huh? . . . They have an endless plan, do you understand? Just to go. . . yes. . . of course."

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Also discussed was the arrival of aircraft from the Soviet Union and the question of mail being aboard the flight which arrived at Havana on 8 October. A TU-114 did arrive in Cuba on 08 October and another TU-114 aircraft arrived Cuba on 11 October. In addition to the territory of Mexico, there are three places in Cuba that bear the name of KALININ. They are at 21-18N 77-16W, 21-46N 77-48W, and 21-18N 77-16W. There are no Soviet SAM installations near any of these locations.

Radio operators in the defense communications continue to make reference to the KALININ operators. It is possibly significant that KALININ operators are manning the sets during the times of the G-2 intercepts. Radio operators have also discussed the departure of the KALININ vessel KALININ.

[redacted] intercepts [redacted] sources during the past week. A [redacted] of intercepts tends to confirm operation [redacted] sites noted active were [redacted]

ELINT information indicates [redacted] in operation including [redacted]

[redacted] intercepts have occurred daily since 11 November 1963, except on 14 November. The duration of the target tracking signals reported thus far in November has averaged less than four minutes, with approximately fifty percent of the recent intercepts not exceeding one minute in duration. The longest recent intercept occurred on 15 November for a period of approximately 19 minutes. The majority of intercepts during the current month have occurred during morning hours; however, intercepts after 1200Z were reported on 14, 20 and 23 November.

PART II: CUBAN COMMUNICATIONS

Cuban [redacted] facilities reveal [redacted] communications link serving [redacted]

[redacted] on 14 November 1963. The [redacted] has subsequently been active on 14 November 1963 and was referred to in a conversation between [redacted]

Activity has consisted of communications chatter with only one message, requesting oxygen tanks and oil, having been noted on 14 November. This link may presage an increase of activity at Varadero.

PART III A: CUBAN ARMED FORCES

The continuation of operations by Anti-Insurgent Forces (ICB)

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in the Occambray Mountain area has been observed in COMINT during this reporting period. In addition to the ICB forces reported to be participating in this operation, the deployment of Western Army troops to the area indicates an increased operational effort. (2/0 [redacted] R55-63, [redacted] R113-63).

Several references to a combing operation utilizing the combined efforts of the Department of State Security (DSE), Department of Public Order (DOP), and the coastal vigilance observation post force were included in messages from Central Army HQ, Santa Clara, to MINFAR Havana, on 23 November. This operation was effected at Cayo Abuelo (22-22N 79-11W), Municipality of Yaguajay, in order to apprehend persons attempting to flee the country. (2/SL [redacted] R293-63).

There were also several messages about an operation in the Sagua La Grande area of Las Villas Province. An insurgent band consisting of three individuals was captured at San Pedro Farm, in the Municipality of Terralillo (22-59N 80-36W), on 21 November. Members of ICB Military Unit Number 3009 (San Vicente, 22-55N 80-29W) were apparently utilized for this operation. (2/SL [redacted] R286-63, [redacted] R292-63).

Reference to a "new organization" was observed in a message intercepted on Anti-Insurgent Forces communications at 2126Z on 26 November. The Chief of Personnel, ICB Division, Trinidad, ordered the Chiefs of Personnel of his subordinate battalions to report to his headquarters to try to resolve the new organization. Since mention was made of a new organization and not "reorganization," the possibility exists that this is in reference to the Cuban Government's Anti-Raider Forces (ICRF). Prior references to ICRF have not been observed in this particular area, substantiating the possibility of the ICRF organization in southern Las Villas Province. (2/SL [redacted] R301-63).

The bilateral field maneuvers conducted by elements of the Central Army during the period 25 to 30 November were apparently witnessed by officials representing Ground Forces elements throughout Cuba. Invitations to observe these maneuvers were extended to officials or delegations of Western Army Headquarters and First Army Headquarters, Anti-Air Defense/FAIR, and Naval Headquarters, Havana. Representatives from MINFAR were also invited, and all observers were to be at Cienfuegos by 2100Z on 24 November, indicating that the maneuvers (or at least some phase of these maneuvers) were to be held in the Cienfuegos area. (2/SL [redacted] R20-63).

An interest of the Cuban Military Intelligence in the U.S.-Latin American military exercise ("Cabeza de Playa America"), to be held next week in Colombia, was evidenced by the intercept of a message in which the Chief of Intelligence at First Army Headquarters reported the exercise to his counterpart in Guacanaym on 21 November 1963. (2/SL [redacted] R185-63).

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All subordinate units of the First Army Headquarters in both Eastern and Southern Provinces were placed in an alert status at 0320Z on 22 November 1963 (2/LR [redacted] 187-63).

The alert was issued at the Pilon (probably 19-58N 77-12W) Central Battle Position as revealed in a message from the Chief, Southern Sector, First Army Headquarters, Pilon, to Chief of Staff, First Army Headquarters, on 23 November 1963 (2/LR [redacted] 43).

PART III. B. 1. SUMMARY OF SITUATION

One of the KIMBO class vessels, the LC-250, has suffered one of the first accidents involving a KIMBO vessel in Cuba. At approximately 0200 on 26 November, the LC-250 ran aground while entering the bay of Maria, sustaining uncontrollable leaks. Salvage vessels went to the scene including the GC-59, BO-11, and LC-28. Salvage operations were worked until 2215Z, when it was determined that salvage operations were complete (2/QS [redacted] R679-63 and 2/LR [redacted] 43). The LC-250 is now in drydock, presumably at Mariel (2/LR [redacted] 43).

A Cuban ship named the INDIANICO was forced by passengers to put into the Western Bay at 0400 on 26 November. Four persons aboard the vessel were reported to have been asylum at the base but a reliable source stated that 12 persons remained at the base and four others returned with the INDIANICO. The vessel was escorted by a destroyer to the naval landing at Caimanera (19-58N 75-09W) from the Naval Base (2/LR [redacted] R190, 186-63 and 2/QS [redacted] 168-63). A later report disclosed that 12 passengers and 5 crewmen, including the ship's captain, remained at the Guantanamo Naval Base (2/LR [redacted] 43).

An alert which began on 22 November in Oriente Province was apparently prompted by the death of President KENNEDY. While no orders or directives have been noted canceling the alert, there were indications that it probably was to terminate on 25 November. On 25 November instructions were passed from bases to a subordinate unit that bases could be granted to 25 percent of its personnel (2/QS [redacted] 254-63 and 2/QS [redacted] 196-63).

The USS JOSEPH E. HELLER, TAC-171, has been the subject of recurring Cuban reports concerning its position. These reports have been noted being passed from Havana to Cienfuegos, the KIMBO-class PMS Headquarters. The reports were first noted in September and have continued until November (2/QS [redacted] R195-63).

The Cienfuegos Naval Base was informed on 23 November by Naval Headquarters in Havana that there would be exercises scheduled from 23 to 30 November in the Bay West area by U.S. aircraft. The exercises would include pyrotechnical and lateral firing, air to ground firing and illumination practices. The information was reported to have been obtained "by our sources." These sources were not identified (2/LR [redacted] R30-63).

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The coast guard vessel GC-79 was ordered on 22 November to patrol an area from 22-49N 83-47W to 22-50N 83-39W to intercept some pirate vessels. Later the vessel was directed to patrol from 22-49N 84-02W to a point 20 miles north of Bahia Honda and then to go to Havana upon completion of the assignment. Apparently, this mission was carried out without success since there have been no further reflections of the pirate vessels (2/07 [redacted] R198-63 and 2/07 [redacted] R554-63).

The location of the Anti-Pirate Organization (LCP, LUCHA CONTRA PIRATAS) was revealed in the Eastern as well as in the Central and probably Eastern portions of Cuba when a Captain (FNU) PANTOJA, identified as the Chief of the LCP, authorized the installation of some unidentified equipment in an observation post in the Western Naval District. A Major (FNU) RODRIGUEZ has been noted as LCP Commander; it is believed that Capt PANTOJA is Commander of the Western LCP forces or possibly a local LCP commander in the Western Naval District. [redacted] is probably subordinate to the Anti-Insurgent Forces (2/07 [redacted] R56-63).

There has been only one inter-area movement noted in the period covered by this report. On 17 November intercept disclosed that the frigate F-543, which has been operating out of Cienfuegos since 28 August 1963, was to return to Havana. On 29 November the F543 reported it had entered Western Naval District jurisdictional waters. The time of departure from Cienfuegos was not observed (2/07 [redacted] R60-63).

A possible anti-aircraft firing practice was held, probably in the Cabanas area, on 26 November from 1500Z to 1800Z. The firing consisted of 37-mm artillery pieces. It was reported that an area higher than 5,000 meters and further than 300 meters from the coast would be considered safe (2/07 [redacted] R32-63).

The KONAR-class FUREN (LC) were active in various practices during the week. Two LC's were involved in K-2 technique training from 242359Z to 250330Z. On 28 November, four LC's participated in an undetermined type of exercise in the Cabanas/Mariel area from 1400Z to 1700Z (2/07 [redacted] R670-63, R672-63, R682-63).

In the Eastern Naval District the GC-35 was engaged in night exercises of a three-fold nature: there was training of officers in night navigation, familiarization of local communications procedures, and a radar exercise (probably a radar calibration test for Punta de Mulas) (see 2/07 [redacted] R192-63).

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