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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
Fort George G. Meade, Maryland

COMINT REPORT

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2/0/ [redacted] R66-63
29 Nov 63 2103Z
DIST: O/WQ
ST 011, 021, 051,
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STATUS OF CUBAN/SOVIET COMMUNICATIONS AS OF 29 NOVEMBER 1963

PART 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 N0C 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 Linopax and Logar 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 and Holguin areas, the new Air Defense-associated link between the Havana and Camagney areas, the Limonar-Pinar del Rio and Sagua la Grande links, the Western Sector Weapons Control Group and the Camagney-Victoria de las Tunas and Santiago de Cuba areas of the Eastern Sector Weapons Control Group, and a new

[redacted]
was first heard 21 and 22/23 November. [redacted]
This new link is unlocated. Soviet activity was noted as late as 23 November on Cuban [redacted] facilities and [redacted] facilities.
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 19 October 1963. It is possible that the air defense-associated link between

[redacted]
communication was [redacted] link.
[redacted]

All three of the subscribers of 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 multi-channel (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 his to Mexico, huh? . . . They have an endless plan, do you understand? Just to go. . . yes. . . of course."

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270, [redacted] R66-63

Also discussed was the arrival of aircraft from the Soviet Union and the question of [redacted] being aboard the flight which arrived at Havana on 08 October. A TU-114 did arrive in Cuba on 08 October and two TU-114 aircraft arrived Cuba on 11 October. In addition to the country of Mexico, there are three places in Cuba that bear that name. They are at 21-18N 77-16W, 21-46N 77-48W, and 21-18N 77-33W. There are no Soviet SAM installations near any of these locations.

Radio operators on the defense communications continue to make reference to inexperienced operators. It is possibly significant that experienced operators are manning the sets during the times of the [redacted] intercepts. Radio operators have also discussed the departure of the Soviet vessel KALININ.

[redacted] intercepts of [redacted] signals during the past week. [redacted] intercept [redacted] leads to confirmed operations. [redacted] sites noted active were [redacted]

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

[redacted] intercepts have occurred daily since 11 November 1963, except for [redacted] 14 November. The duration of the target tracking signals recorded 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 target 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 1700Z were reported on 14, 20 and 23 November.

PART II: CUBAN COMMUNICATIONS

Cuban [redacted] facilities revealed [redacted] communications link serving [redacted] on 14 November 1963. The [redacted] has subsequently been active on [redacted] 14 November 1963 and was referred to in a conversation between [redacted]

Activity has consisted of [redacted] 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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2/0 [redacted] /R66-63

In the Eastern [redacted] 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 indicated an increased operational effort (2/0 [redacted] 85-63 and 2/Y [redacted] 83-63).

Several references to a coming operation utilizing the combined efforts of the Department of State Security (DSE), Department of Public Order (DOP) and the coastal vigilance observation post forces are reflected in messages from Central Army HQ, Santa Clara, to [redacted] Havana, on 23 November. This operation was effected in Ciego de Avila (22-22N 80-11W), Municipality of Yaguajay, in order to apprehend persons attempting to flee the country (2/SL [redacted] 29-63).

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 Farn, in the Municipality of Cornellillo (22-50N 80-36W), on 21 November. Members of LCP Military Unit Number 3009 (San Vicente, 22-55N 80-29W) were apparently utilized for this operation (2/SL [redacted] 28-63, 2/Y [redacted] 292-63).

Reference to a "new organization" was observed in a message intercepted of 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 (LCP). Prior references to LCP have not been observed in this particular area, substantiating the possibility of the LCP organization in southern Las Villas Province (2/Y [redacted] 8301-63).

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/FAR, and Naval Headquarters, Havana. Representatives from MEFAR 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] 820-63).

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 Guantanamo on 21 November 1963 (2/SL [redacted] 8185-63).

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2/0 [redacted] R66-63

All subordinate units of the Eastern and Southern Orients were placed in an alert status at 0202 on 22 November 1963 (2/0 [redacted] R187-63).

The urgency of need of food at Pilon (probably 19-58N) was reported in a message from the Chief, South Sector, Sierra Madre Headquarters, Pilon, to Chief of Staff, First Army Headquarters, on 22 November 1963 (2/0 [redacted] R663-63).

PART I: B. CUBAN NAVAL OPERATIONS

One of the Cuban Navy's (CNS) IC-250, has suffered one of the first accidents involving a Cuban vessel in Cuba. At approximately 0830 on 26 November 1963, the IC-250 ran aground while entering the port of Mariel, sustaining uncontrollable leaks. Salvage vessels sent to the scene included the GC-51, 30-11, and 1-2. They were exhausted and worked until 2315Z, when it was deemed that salvage operations were complete (2/0 [redacted] R679-63 and 2/0 [redacted] R685-63). The IC-250 is now in drydock, presumably at Mariel (2/0 [redacted] R685-63).

Cuban reports based on the (CNS) was forced by passengers to put into the (CNS) Naval Base on 25 November. Four persons aboard the vessel reported to have been granted asylum at the base but a reliable source reports that 12 persons remained at the base and four others returned with the (CNS). The vessel was escorted by a destroyer to the canal lead to Caimanera (19-52N 75-07W) from the Naval Base (2/0 [redacted] R190, 186-63 and 2/0 [redacted] R168-63). A later report disclosed that 12 passengers and 5 crewmen, including the ship's captain, remained at the Guantanamo Naval Base (2/0 [redacted] R191-63).

An alert was begun on 22 November in Oriente Province was apparently prompted by the death of President KENNEDY. While no orders or directives have been noted cancelling 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 leaders should be granted to 25 percent of its personnel (2/0 [redacted] R254-63 and 2/0 [redacted] R196-63).

The USNS JOSEPH E. MILLER, TAC-171, has been the subject of recurring Cuban reports concerning its position. These reports have been noted being passed from Havana to Cabanas, the KCMAR-class NMC Headquarters. The reports were first noted in September and have continued until November (2/0 [redacted] R195-63).

The Cabanas 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 Key West area by U.S. aircraft. The exercises would include preferential 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 (2/0 [redacted] R20-63).

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2/0 [redacted] R66-63

The coast guard vessel [redacted] 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 22-38N 84-02W to a point 20 miles north of Bahia Honda and then to Havana upon completion of the assignment. Apparently, the mission was carried out without success since there have been no further reflections of the pirate vessels (2/0 [redacted] R198-63 and 2/0 [redacted] R354-63).

The location of the Anti-Pirate Organization (LCP, LUCHA CONTRA PIRATAS) was revealed as in the Eastern as well as in the Central and probably Eastern portions of the area when a Captain (FNU) PANTOJA, identified as the Chief of the LCP, authorized the installation of some unidentified equipment at an observation post in the Western Naval District. A Major PEDRO LUIS RODRIGUEZ has been noted as LCP Commander; it is believed that Captain 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 (2/0 [redacted] R56-63).

There has been only one over-area movement noted in the period covered by this report. On 27 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 (2/0 [redacted] R60-63).

A possible anti-aircraft firing practice was held, probably in the Cabañas area, on 26 November from 1500Z to 1800Z. The firing consisted of 37-mm artillery rounds. It was reported that an area higher than 3,000 meters or higher than 300 meters from the coast would be considered safe (2/0 [redacted] R112-63).

The LONAS-class FUB's [redacted] were active in various practices during the week. Two LC's were involved in K-2 technique training from 262300Z to 270300Z. On 27 November, four LC's participated in an undetained type of [redacted] in the Cabañas/Mariel area from 1400Z to 1700Z (2/0 [redacted] R50-63, R672-63, R682-63).

In the Eastern Naval District the GC-95 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 2/0 [redacted] R192-63).

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