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CUBAN AIR FORCE LONG-RANGE FLIGHTS

The following item dated 182030Z Jun 62 is released by NSA as received from the field:

1. Pilot chatter referring to wing tanks on 16 June 1962 may provide evidence Cuban Air Force jet fighters have long-range capabilities ((A)), and that pilots are becoming more adept in aircraft handling. This suggestion is based on the following:

During a training flight on 16 June, one pilot (suffix 31) experienced difficulty switching from one wing tank to the other, causing his right wing to dip. An unknown station asked 31 if his aircraft was controllable, and if not, to drop his tank. The pilot replied that he was in full control of his aircraft, and subsequently requested and was granted permission to enter the traffic pattern. The pilot was definitely Cuban, and may be considered experienced in that at no time did he appear to lose control of his situation.

2. In context with above it was also noted that a "Buddy system" seems to be in effect in the Cuban Air Force, in that while pilot 31 was having difficulties, he was in constant communications with only one other pilot (suffix 41). Shortly before being cleared for landing, he established communications with suffix 61.

((A)) [redacted] COMMENT: The ranges of MIG planes are:

MIG - 15 NATO Code Name: "Fagot"

Normal range: 896 km (560 miles)

Range with external tanks: 1,340 km (840 miles)

MIG - 17 NATO Code Name: "Fresco"

Normal range: 820 km (510 miles)

Range with external tanks: 1,860 km (1,160 miles)

MIG - 19 NATO Code Name: "Farmer"

Normal range: 965 km (600 miles)

Range with external tanks: 1,370 km (850 miles)