

[REDACTED]
ELECTRICAL RELEASE
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DIST: [REDACTED]

FURTHER UNUSUAL SOVIET/CUBAN TRADE
RELATIONS RECENTLY NOTED

1. In addition to the Soviet cargo ships reported earlier as en route or possibly en route Cuba [REDACTED] at least two more, the F. VAVILOV [FYU, 12090GT] and the UMAN [ULFH, 5620GT], have departed the Black Sea declaring for Conakry with low cargo tonnages reported and are presently en route Cuba. Also, there is an indication that three more Soviet merchant ships are following the same general pattern. These are: (a) KILBURG VEZHNEVSKIJ [UYOK, 12016GT], which declared for Accra with 1300 tons of "General" cargo; (b) METALLURG BARDIN [URDP, 12285GT], which declared for Conakry with 1438 tons of "General" cargo; and (c) METALLURG BAJKOV [UWQU, 12017GT], which declared for Casablanca with 140 [sic] tons "General" cargo. It is estimated that these ships may be en route Cuba. Additionally, the cargo ships AL'MET'EVSK [UKKB, 5419GT], BALTISK [UVHY, 5585GT], and the IZHEVSK [UICP, 5513GT], which departed the Baltic with unknown cargoes, and the KURA [UYSM, 4048GT], which departed the Black Sea with 2427 tons of grain, are also presently en route Cuba. No unusual circumstances surround these last four ships.

2. Four of the cargo ships reported earlier, as possibly, are now definitely determined to be en route Cuba, i.e., the H. PIROGOV, F. KURCHATOV, LENINOGORSK, and the MEDNOGORSK.

3. Thus far in the 3rd quarter of 1962, 21 Soviet merchant vessels representing 134,107 gross tons (plus 3 possible candidates totaling 36,888 gross tons) are either en route or have arrived in Cuba from the Soviet Union. The following chart provides figures for comparison purposes of tonnages arriving from the USSR (NOTE: Figures represent gross tonnage of vessels involved, not of cargoes actually delivered):

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6. There is some evidence to substantiate an assumption that at least some of these ships may be carrying military cargo. It has been past experience that the Soviets generally attempt to conceal military shipments by such means as declaring it "Varied" or "General" cargo. At least nine (not including the three possibilities noted in paragraph 1) of these vessels did, in fact, make such declarations which permits the assessing of a certain amount of the cargo to be possibly military.

7. However, it is considered that any assumptions concerning a general increase or a rapid acceleration of transport of military equipment from the USSR to Cuba is to be treated with extreme reserve.

