

October 25, 1962

Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Cuba, 'A Cuban Leader Talked about Domestic Mobilization'

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Summary:

A report on the meeting between Huang Wenyou and Joaquin Ordoqui. They discuss two main issues: the fact that the oil supply and general economic conditions in Cuba are tough, but the Cuban people still remain positive; and the American mobilization for invasion and war against Cuba, especially given the fact that Kennedy recently took a hard line against Cuba in a meeting with Gromyko (a Soviet official).

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Chinese

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[...]

A Cuban Leader Talked about Domestic Mobilization

To the Foreign Ministry and Military Intelligence Department,

On the night of 24 October, Counselor Huang [Wenyou] had a meeting with Ordoqui, member of the national leadership committee of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (IRO). Ordoqui said that the present situation in Cuba was good. Over the past few months [the IRO] has, as to buy time [for war preparation], made arrangements in all sectors. More than forty brigades have been raised with both civil defense and militias having started to be mobilized. In Havana, 96 million rifles, as long as they could still shoot, have been distributed among soldiers. On top of these, thirteen anti-amphibious battalions have been established, which were small in number of personnel but very strong in firepower. Settlements have been made on industrial and agricultural productions. Because of the war and mobilization, industrial production will shrink and perhaps even stagnate. By contrast, the agricultural sector will be different. [Cubans] will not starve to death; [they are] estimated to hold out for some year and half. The oil supply is a headache. [The IRO] has drafted a proposal for restricting petrol consumption which will be promulgated soon. The people worked in a high spirit, ready to engage [the enemy] at any minute, which in Ordoqui's opinion is critical. He added that Fidel Castro's speech yesterday is correct, [and] has received positive reactions from the people.

On a [possible] American invasion, he reckoned that by the end of this week, the US would have mobilized four divisions. An American aircraft carrier has already anchored in the water not far from Cuba. Today near the Mariel Harbor an American aircraft [was detected] which flew towards Cuba and at about 300 meters off the Cuban coast, rose quickly to a level as high as 3000 meters. The American air force has frequently intruded into Mariel, Matanzas, Oriente, and the hinterland of Havana Province. Their provocation and intrusion into Cuban territorial sky have proved increasingly blatant. The General Staff has ordered to shoot down [invading American aircraft], on the only condition that the wreckage could be collected on Cuban territory.

He also mentioned the meeting [on 18 October] between John F. Kennedy and [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei] Gromyko, which appeared not good. Kennedy demonstrated a hard line. Kennedy said: "We have evidence to prove that Cuba has already obtained the aggressive weaponry. Why do you say that the weaponry is defensive?" "Why do you bother asking if you [already] have the evidence?" Gromyko answered.

[Chinese] Embassy in Cuba
25 October 1962