

April 1961

Information of the Soviet Ambassador in Cuba on 18 April

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<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/301008>

Summary:

Czechoslovak diplomats in Havana inform Prague of the Soviet envoy's admission that the threat of US-sponsored counter-revolution left Castro with no other choice but to turn to Marx and Lenin and to rely on the help of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries

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INFORMATION OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR from CUBA dated APRIL 18 of this year.

A bandit attack by counter-revolutionary aircraft on April 15 on a number of Cuban cities convinced the Cubans that this attack was a prelude to a wider invasion.

Kennedy's statement that the US armed forces would not participate in intervention against Cuba was intended, on the one hand, to give the counter-revolutionaries a free hand and to present the attack on Cuba, actually organized and directed by the US, as a purely internal Cuban affair, as a struggle between the Cubans themselves in order to make it difficult for the socialist camp to help Cuba.

Fidel Castro, together with the leadership of his friends, came to the conclusion that in the current situation it was necessary to clearly announce to the people the beginning of a new stage in the Cuban revolution in order to unite the working class and peasantry even more closely around the revolutionary government.

Fidel Castro, in a speech on April 16, declared that the Cuban revolution was socialist in nature.

This statement by Fidel Castro was very well received by the people.

According to the information available to the Consulate, military operations to eliminate the landed enemy gangs are developing satisfactorily on the whole.

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The Cuban command has the impression that in the Ciénaga area Oriental de Zapata landed the main enemy forces.

Well-trained and well-armed units of the external counter-revolutionary forces were landed in this area. They have a large amount of artillery, tanks and especially mortars. Therefore, at first, parts of the Cuban revolutionary army, which were armed only with light weapons, suffered heavy losses until artillery and tanks arrived.

The forces of external counter-revolution that landed in this area apparently expect to gain a foothold and create a puppet government in the port of Giron, which will then receive direct military assistance from the United States after its official recognition.

During the night of April 17-18, there were no landings of external counter-revolutionary forces in new locations in Cuba. There were no open counter-revolutionary protests either in the capital or in other cities, which, on the one hand, is due to the decisive measures taken by the government these days against internal counter-revolution, and, on the other hand, to the great upsurge of the revolutionary spirit of the Cuban people, selflessly leading the fight against the forces of internal and external counter-revolution. The revolutionary army and people's militia, which entered into the first battles with opponents, behave heroically, showing steadfastness and endurance.

The initiative is now in the hands of the revolutionary army and police.

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From the testimony of the prisoners, it is clear that this group was trained in Guatemala, then was transferred to Nicaragua and from there was escorted by American destroyers. Tanks and guns were delivered to the landing site on a special American ship. American fighters continue to protect the counter-revolutionary bombers from pursuit.

The statement of the Soviet government made in connection with the aggression against Cuba, as well as the Message from Comrade Khrushchev to President Kennedy on this issue, aroused enormous enthusiasm among the population of the capital. They made a deep impression on Fidel Castro and Dorticos. Fidel Castro and Dorticos were very touched by this support.

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