

**November 20, 1962**  
**Memorandum from the Head of the USSR Merchant  
Fleet to the CC CPSU**

**Citation:**

"Memorandum from the Head of the USSR Merchant Fleet to the CC CPSU", November 20, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), Moscow; copy provided to CWIHP by R. Pikhov and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/111208>

**Summary:**

Bakaev tells the CC CPSU that Soviet ships en route to Cuba are subject to overhead flights and surveillance by Americans.

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

I am reporting on the situation on the USSR-Cuban sea lanes.

At the present time, there are 20 dry-cargo ships and 4 oil-carriers on their way to Cuba from Soviet ports on the Baltic, the Black Sea, and in the Far East, carrying industrial and agricultural equipment, automobiles, metal, grain, flour, conserves, sulfates, oil, gas, ammonia, and other loads. Besides this, the tanker the "Tukmus" is nearing Cuba, sailing out of the Canadian port of Montreal with a cargo of animal fat. Four of the vessels mentioned are passing through the zone of the blockade imposed by the USA. The others will reach this zone between 20 and 30 November.

There are 13 dry-cargo vessels and 7 tankers en route from Cuba to Soviet ports. They have all successfully passed through the blockade zone.

The Soviet vessels bound for Cuba are being subjected to overhead flights by USA Navy airplanes during their whole passage across the Atlantic Ocean. Within the blockade zone these flights occur more frequently, aerial photos are taken, American ships come up close to them, inquiring what cargo is being carried and where, and then they follow close behind the Soviet ships until they reach the territorial waters of Cuba. Demands concerning the stopping of the ships or the carrying out of inspections by American naval ships are not forthcoming.

The Minister of the Merchant Fleet

(V. BAKAEV)

[Source: Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), Moscow; copy provided to CWIHP by R. Pikhov and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]