

Research Division  
Republican National Committee

October 1962

THE BUILDUP OF COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE STRENGTH IN CUBA - THE ACCUSATIONS AND  
THE DENIALS

August 8: Dr. S. Leu says over 4000 USSR soldiers landed in Cuba since July 29; no troops reported seen in Cuba (NY Times 11:4)

August 9: U.S. officials doubt Dr. Leu's report (NY Times 10:5)

August 21: Miro Cardona says over 5000 USSR bloc troops have arrived (NY Times 12:5)

US reports 15 USSR ships including 5 passenger vessels arrived late July; doubts troops shipment; speculates civilian technicians and military advisers arrived; believes USSR bolsters Cuban defenses. (NY Times 12:5)

August 22: President Kennedy at press conference:

"Yes, new supplies, definitely, in large quantities. Troops, we do not have information, but an increased number of technicians."

Q.: "What is the significance of this, in your opinion?"

A.: "Well, we are examining it now."

Q.: "Do you think it is aimed at any other Central American country?"

A.: "No, there is no evidence of that. And we are not talking about -- as far as the numbers, we are not talking about the kind of entrants in numbers which would provide support for the sort of operation you suggested. What we are talking about are supplies and technicians of rather intensive quantity in recent weeks."

August 25: US reports USSR has stepped up shipments of military equipment and technical personnel; cites arrival of more than 20 ships since late July; estimates technical personnel at 3,000-5,000; doubts arms are sufficient for offensive power. (NY Times 1:4)

August 26: Justice Department impounds two motor launches (after Miramar shelling) and warns of violations of U. S. neutrality laws (NY Times 1:7)

August 29: Senator Capehart charges USSR combat troops in Cuba; demands JFK order invasion. (NY Times 2:6,7)

Washington diplomats cite problems USSR faces in making massive aid effective, influx of technical personnel linked with need to control faltering economy. (NY Times 2:6,7)

August 29: President Kennedy at press conference:

"We have no evidence of troops....we do not have information that troops have come into Cuba, number one; number two, the main thrust, of course, is assistance because of the mismanagement of the Cuban economy... I am not for invading Cuba at this time. ...I think it would be a mistake to invade Cuba. ...Because it would lead -- that it should be -- an action like that, which could be very casually suggested, can lead to very serious consequences for many people."

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- August 29: President Kennedy's press conference, concluded:  
Q.: "...Some of us were told at the State Department the other day that there is Russian military personnel in Cuba...and they are people who are probably going to operate missiles, similar to the NIKE missiles..."  
A.: "I don't know who told you that at the State Department, that they are going to operate NIKE missiles, because that information we do not have at this time. ....we do not have evidence that there are Russian troops there. This is an expanded advisory and technical mission."
- August 31: Senator Kenneth B. Keating (R.-N.Y.) charges in Senate speech that truth of situation is not being told and that military personnel and offensive military equipment is being sent to Cuba from USSR.
- September 1: Senator Keating reports 1200 uniformed USSR troops in Cuba; U.S. Government denies having such data (NY Times, 2:6,7)
- September 3: Senator Keating asks OAS investigation to see if there are missile bases in Cuba. (NY Times, 1:7)
- September 5: President Kennedy pledges US to act against any aggression from Cuba; statement after talks with Congressional leaders; says Castro has been bolstered by USSR military aid but denies evidence of offensive capability. (NY Times, 2:4)  
Senator Keating demands US stop Allies from letting USSR use their ships for military aid. (NY Times 1:8)  
Senator Barry Goldwater, (R.-Ariz.) urges blockade. (NY Times 2:3)
- September 8: Administration sources say Berlin, not Cuba, is linked to President's request to Congress for standby authority to call up 150,000 reservists and National Guardsmen for 1 year service. (NY Times, 1:8)
- September 9: Senator Karl Mundt (R.-S. Dak.) urges immediate air/naval blockade (NY Times, 41:1)
- September 10: Senator Keating urges limited blockade. (NY Times 6:3)
- September 13: Cuban pilot, defecting in Czech-built plane, says USSR put 200 MIG fighters in Cuba, names locations, reports new bases, says there are about 100 USSR air force specialists on hand, including two with rank of marshal. (NY Times, 1:2)  
Secretary of State Dean Rusk assures House Foreign Affairs and Armed Service Committees, in closed session, that US will not permit Cuba to become base for aggression (NY Times 1:3)
- September 14: President Kennedy says US would move against Castro to defend US security - military action not justified now - says economy is crumbling in Cuba and Castro in trouble - scores "loose talk" - urges Americans "keep both their nerve and their head" - (NY Times 1:8)



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- September 16: Chester Bowles addresses Hadassah Convention, Pittsburgh -- says firm (i.e. military) action against Cuba would cost us UN support, moral leadership, etc. -- suggests "A deep national dedication, reflected in all that we do and say, to the creation of a more rational and peaceful world. ...it is said that...we must stop the Communists with 'force' ...Such thinking, in my view, is rash, misinformed, and dangerous...The ultimate 'realism'...is to identify ourselves by action as well as rhetoric with these basic human aspirations...which have moved men from the beginning of time."
- September 18: Former Vice President Nixon in Los Angeles called for a "quarantine" of Cuba, possibly taken unilaterally. Mr. Nixon suggested this could involve use of a naval blockade.
- October 5: President Kennedy in Cincinnati speech, "This last administration ignored Latin America for eight years and we paid the price."
- October 3: George Ball, Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs testifying before House Select Committee on Export Control (as reported in Walter Lippman column inserted in Congressional Record, October 9: "...three and possibly four missile sites of a different type from short range missiles previously listed by Ball have been identified. These sites are similar to known Soviet coastal defense missiles.... with a range of 20 to 35 miles."
- October 9: Senator Keating, Senate speech, calls for stronger Cuban stand -- "Under Secretary Ball...said that four missile sites of different types have been identified. He said that these sites are similar to known Soviet defense missile sites...The significant sentence, rather buried away, is that several more such sites will be installed.
- "Many other facts have been stated which have been known to some of us but which have not been publicly stated before...I stand on my statement that more than 5000 troops are stationed in Cuba. Five thousand is a modest figure."
- October 10: Senator Keating, Senate speech, -- "Construction has begun on at least a half dozen launching sites for intermediate range tactical missiles...The fact of the matter is, according to my reliable sources, that six launching pads are under construction -- pads which will have the power to hurl rockets into the American heart land and as far as the Panama Canal Zone. Why would Under Secretary Ball give the committee the impression that new missile sites were a possibility rather than a fact? Even as possibilities, he indicated they would be short range rather than intermediate range missile sites. Why has such a veil been thrown around Cuba, keeping this new information from the American people? Are they still trying to perpetuate the myth that the buildup is defensive? Is it possible anyone in Government is childish enough to believe this? ~~that~~ The American people are being kept in the dark. The Soviets know the fact. The Cubans know this fact. But in the view of the administration our people are not entitled to know it."

October 13: President Kennedy, in Indianapolis, Indiana speech, aimed at Indiana Republican Senator Homer Capehart, denounced "self-appointed generals and admirals who want to send someone else's sons to war" President Kennedy urged voters to repudiate "confused and intemperate talk that strengthens the claims of our adversaries."

October 19: In the WASHINGTON WORLD, October 19, two articles appeared written especially for the WORLD. Under title "Does Cuba Comprise a Military Threat to the U.S." writers Carlos Todd, Editor, Cuban Information Service, Coral Gables, Florida, and former columnist for HAVANA TIMES and George W. Ball, Under Secretary of State, took positive and negative sides respectively:

Mr. Todd: "In Cuba today, upwards of 20,000 communist-bloc troops are stationed...The military threat of Cuba is very real. Rockets, 30 feet long and 120 inches in diameter, have been sighted...It is known in Washington that the communists have six operational missile launching pads in Cuba and 15 under construction. The pads are designed for intermediate range ballistic missiles with a range of 1700 miles..."

Mr. Ball: (opening sentence) "Our policy towards Cuba is based upon the assessment that Cuba does not today constitute a military threat to the U.S....In the past few weeks we have read much in the newspapers of the military buildup of Cuba by the Soviet Union. Quite clearly it does not constitute a threat to the U. S....To date fifteen SAM (surface-to-air-missile) sites have been established in the island. We estimate the total may eventually reach 25. These are anti-aircraft missiles having a slant range of 20 to 25 miles. In addition, three and possibly four missile sites of a different type have been identified. These sites are similar to known Soviet coastal defense missile sites that are believed to accommodate anti-shiping missiles with a range of 20-25 miles. Quite likely several more such sites will be installed...The crash efforts of the Soviet Union to provide the Castro regime with economic technicians and to build up its military defenses is a demonstration of Cuban weakness... We may take the events of the past month - regrettable as they may be in many ways - as evidence of the essential soundness of the strategy of isolation that we have pursued toward Cuba over the past two years..."

October 22: President Kennedy, addressing the nation on the Cuban crisis, announced that:

- 1) Offensive missile sites were either installed or in preparation;
- 2) The Soviets had lied to the United States to their intention in Cuba;
- 3) Cuba was now "...an important strategic base..." and "...an explicit threat to the peace and security of all the Americas..." The buildup "...had been planned some months ago."
- 4) He was taking action to halt shipment of "...cargoes of offensive weapons..." bound for Cuba;
- 5) "...this latest Soviet threat...must and will be met with determination..." and "...the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing."

Every one of these major points had been made by Republicans prior to the President's speech. Every one had been denied by leading Democrats.

(Note: Where the NEW YORK TIMES is cited as a source, the dates in the left hand margin refer to the dates the item appeared in the TIMES.)



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REPUBLICANS WHO SOUGHT A CUBAN BLOCKADE PRIOR TO  
PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S OCTOBER 22, 1962, SPEECH

(A preliminary survey indicates the following had all urged a  
Cuban blockade prior to the recent action taken by the  
Administration)

Richard M. Nixon, May 5, 1961 and September 18, 1962

The following Republican Senators:

Senator Styles Bridges (New Hampshire), May 7, 1961  
Senator Jack Miller (Iowa), August 3, 1961  
Senator Carl T. Curtis (Nebraska), August 24, 1961  
Senator Barry Goldwater (Arizona), September 5, 1962  
Senator Homer Capehart (Indiana)  
Senator Karl Mundt (South Dakota), September 8, 1962  
Senator Kenneth B. Keating (New York), September 9, 1962  
Senator Bourke B. Hickenlooper (Iowa)  
Senator Joe H. Bottum, Jr. (South Dakota)

The following Republican Members of the House of Representatives:

Bruce Alger (Texas), May 17, 1961  
Craig Hosmer (California), August 9, 1961  
Chester Merrow (New Hampshire), May 11, 1961  
Earl Wilson (Indiana), May 22, 1961  
Glenn Cunningham (Nebraska), September 26, 1961  
Clark MacGregor (Minnesota)  
Melvin R. Laird (Wisconsin)  
Joel T. Broyhill (Virginia)  
John Rousset (California)  
James Van Zandt (Pennsylvania)  
Robert Dole (Kansas)  
William E. Miller (New York)  
Charles S. Gubser (California)  
William H. Harrison (Wyoming)  
Peter Frelinghuysen, Jr. (New Jersey)  
Steven B. Derounian (New York)  
Willard Curtin (Pennsylvania)

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DEMOCRATS WHO OPPOSED A CUBAN BLOCKADE PRIOR TO  
PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S OCTOBER 22, 1962, SPEECH

A preliminary survey revealed the following quotations:

Senator J. William Fulbright (Ark.) Senate speech, June 29, 1961:

"We often hear that the existence of a Communist regime in Cuba is intolerable to the United States. But is that really the case? I know it is embarrassing and annoying and potentially dangerous, but is it really intolerable?

"The possibility of Soviet missile bases and jet aircraft bases in Cuba is frequently noted. I suppose we would all be less comfortable if the Soviets did install missile bases in Cuba, but I am not sure that our national existence would be in substantially greater danger than is the case today. Nor do I think that such bases would substantially alter the balance of power in the world.

"What would substantially alter the balance of power in the world would be precipitate action by the United States resulting in the alienation of most of Latin America, Asia and Africa."

Senator Joseph S. Clark, Jr. Pennsylvania, in Senate speech September 20, 1962:

"This is no time for war hawks. This is no time to call for the imposition of a naval blockade, in itself an act of war. This is no time for garrulous old men to deal lightly with the lives of young men whom they might send to war. ..."

Following are all from Democrats during House debate on Cuban Resolution, September 26, 1962.

Emanuel Celler (N.Y.): "...a naval blockade of Cuba... This is jingoism. A naval blockade is, of course, an act of war..."

Thomas Morgan (Pa.): "The only way we can terminate the Soviet penetration of Cuba is to intercept Soviet ships and other means of transport. Either of these courses of action may lead to war."

Paul Kitchin (N.C.): "...a military blockade..." "...might be an act of war..."

Peter Rodino, Jr. (N.J.): "The action we take, moreover, must be in concert with our American neighbors and friends...not a unilateral move on our part."

Edward P. Boland (Mass.): "These raucous and strident voices calling for... an embargo of Cuba -- what foolish and irresponsible cries. For these are acts of war. Only the foolhardy and unthinking would plunge this nation into an unneeded and unwanted war."

Leonard Farbstein, (N.Y.): "Should we insist upon an immediate blockade with its possible consequences? Is it intelligent to use a cannon to shoot a fly?"