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17 April 1961

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SC No. 00355/61
Copy No. C 79

CENTRAL
INTELLIGENCE
BULLETIN



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per. 058375

date 5 Apr. 77

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Cuba: The Castro regime has reacted with alarm to the bombing of three Cuban airfields on 15 April--mobilizing the 200,000-man Revolutionary Militia and making charges at the UN General Assembly of "direct US aggression." This alarm seems to derive not only from the actual military damage but also from the new indication of mounting disaffection in Cuba's regular military forces. The events of 15 April will further reduce the air force's already low combat potential, at least until the return to Cuba of air force personnel now being trained in bloc countries. Castro now must rely even more heavily upon the Revolutionary Militia on the assumption that it is the only politically dependable military arm of his government. *Ma*

*The anti-Castro Cuban Revolutionary Council has announced that an invasion of Cuba has been carried out by Cuban liberation forces. A Cuban radio station reports that an invasion force landed in the central Cuban province of Matanzas and that militia forces there have called for reinforcements. ~~(CONFIDENTIAL)~~
(Information as of 0400 EST) *See also [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]; 24.*

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DAILY BRIEF

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**SUPPLEMENT
TO THE CURRENT INTELLIGENCE DIGEST**

Office of Current Intelligence
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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LATIN AMERICA

Cuba

(As of 0430) Castro forces have suffered "considerable casualties" and loss of several coastal points in southern Las Villas Province, |

of the attacking forces a unit of the attacking forces had penetrated inland to the Laguna del Tesoro on the Matanzas provincial boundary. A Cuban radio station monitored by US press agencies issued an appeal for ambulances, "because there are many injured in Jaguey Grande," a town in Matanzas some 20 miles from the coast. Although the anti-Castro Revolutionary Council claims that the 17 April landings were intended largely to facilitate action by larger forces already within Cuba, there has as yet been no information.

of any significant action in support of the landing forces.

Pro-Castro groups elsewhere in Latin America were quick to react to the outbreak of fighting in Cuba. Mobs stoned USIA offices in Buenos Aires and the offices of an American airline in the Chilean capital on 17 April. Anti-US demonstrations also occurred in at least six other Latin American cities on the same day, and more demonstrations are scheduled. In

Bogota, demonstrators were dispersed by gunfire in front of the US Embassy. |

Former Ecuadorean Interior Minister Araujo, addressing a pro-Castro rally in Quito on 17 April, called for volunteers to go to Cuba "to fight Yankee imperialism." Mexican ex-President Cardenas announced that he will go to Cuba as a personal gesture of solidarity with the Castro regime.

A Soviet Government statement on 18 April said that continuation of the invasion of Cuba "may have the gravest consequences for world peace." The statement declared that the USSR "reserves the right to take all measures, with all states, to render the necessary assistance to the Republic of Cuba if the armed interference in the affairs of the Cuban peoples is not stopped." The Soviet Government expressed the hope that the US Government would understand that the invasion of Cuba could "endanger the peaceful life of the population of the United States itself." The statement demanded immediate consideration of the Cuban situation by the UN General Assembly.

Sources: |

MIAMI, 17 Apr 61.

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2. Cuba

Fidel Castro's forces, supported by air, tanks, and artillery, are hitting hard against the anti-Castro fighters in southern Las Villas Province, and the next day or two will be critical ones. According to a report from one observer, Soviet-type MIG aircraft were used against the anti-Castro landing forces.

There is still no information of a general Cuban uprising, upon which anti-Castro forces that landed in Cuba on 17 April presumably had counted for assistance. The Castro government continues to maintain silence on the situation in the battle area. The regime is, however, stepping up its moves to arrest actual or potential anti-Castro elements,

On 18 April the Cuban national radio network reported the arrest in Havana of the Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Havana Province, long one of the most outspoken critics of the Castro government. Another broadcast stated that Castro's former Minister of Agriculture Humberto Sorí Marín, who allegedly was involved in an assassination plot against Fidel Castro, was wounded and captured by government forces.

Many Latin American political leaders are sympathetic to the anti-Castro cause, and there have been several anti-Castro demonstrations in Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia. This sentiment is probably reflected in the comment by a Peruvian Foreign Ministry official, who said he was "privately delighted" with the action against Castro. An "anti-Communist guerrilla legion" reportedly was being formed in Guatemala on 18 April; an announcement claimed the organization had 400 men ready to "help in the fight against the Communist regime in Cuba."

On balance, however, pro-Castro and pro-Communist groups in Latin America have been more articulate, although almost always through relatively small groups. On 18 April there were pro-Castro demonstrations, of varying sizes and frequently aimed against US installations, in most Latin American countries; the Communist and pro-Communist direction of these efforts seemed most evident in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela. In Panama, several hundred Castro sympathizers are said to have tried to enter the Canal Zone to demonstrate there. Further demonstrations of "solidarity with Cuba," some possibly violent, are likely.

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On 17 April the Venezuelan Chamber of Deputies unanimously approved a resolution condemning "armed intervention by a foreign country" in Cuba. This followed approval of a similar resolution in the Venezuelan Senate two days earlier. In Chile, Communist and other leftist groups have been urged by the Cuban ambassador to prepare strikes and work stoppages in support of Castro, a tactic which may be employed by pro-Castro elements elsewhere. Press reports state that "volunteers" to help the Castro forces are being enrolled in Brazil, Colombia, and Vene-

zuela, and the Cuban press service claims that "more than 1,000 volunteers" will leave Mexico for Cuba to fight for the Castro regime.

Sources: CIA
3471755, 18 Apr 61
EMB PORT-AU-PRINCE 333, 17 Apr 61 (CONF NOFORN); CIA/FEES
CARACAS and HAVANA, 17 and 18 Apr 61 (Urel)

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