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OCI No. 1210/63

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
29 March 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Movement of SAM Launch Sites in Cuba

1. Since mid-October 1962, when all 24 Soviet surface-to-air (SAM) missile sites became operational, there have been six instances of SAM units shifting location. In two instances--occurring in mid-October 1962--the shifts were minor and temporary to permit construction of permanent facilities. In the remaining four cases, relocation has changed the pattern of effective coverage.

2. In three of the four significant movements, the SAM sites were shifted away from the coast and closer to an important military objective. Relocation in better terrain appeared to be a secondary, but important, consideration, since electronic interference has in some cases hindered radar operations. The changes appeared to be also related to Soviet-Cuban experience gained in acquiring and tracking targets coming within the 20-25 nautical mile (n.m.) effective range of the SAM sites. Details of these three movements are as follows:

a. Between 15 November and 4 December the SAM site originally at CABANAS was shifted generally west about 10 n.m. to the present site at MALDONADO (2012N-7528W). The present site closes a gap in coverage to the north and west, and is farther away from the US naval base at Guantanamo than the former location. Terrain hindrance of acquisition or guidance radar as well as drainage problems at the original location could also have been factors in the move.

b. Between 27 December and 4 January the SENADO site was moved about 18 n.m. southwest to its present location at CAMAGUEY (2122N-7750W). This move appeared to be directed exclusively at providing better protection for the Camaguey military airfield and communications center.

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c. Between 12 and 20 January the CHAPARRA site was moved approximately 15 n.m. south to the present site at HOLGUIN (2052N-7627W). The new site is farther away from the coast and provides better protection for the Soviet armored camp at Holguin as well as for the Holguin airfield.

3. The most recent significant redeployment of the SAM system occurred between 17 and 25 March in Pinar del Rio Province. On 25 March a new SAM site was established at MAJANA (2241N-8249W), about 10 n.m. south of the Soviet armored camp at Artemisa. Six launchers, 3 hold positions, and an occupied guidance area have been observed at the new site. The equipment apparently came from the SAM site at BAHIA HONDA (2257N-8317W), which was evacuated between 17 and 23 March. If this movement is a permanent redeployment of the Bahia Honda site to Majana--a distance of about 30 n.m.--it is a longer move than has been made in the past, and is the first such major relocation in the western half of the island.

4. Possible factors involved in establishing a SAM site at Majana are as follows:

a. The new site provides increased air defense coverage of the military installations at Artemisa, the major airfield at San Antonio de los Banos, and the port of Mariel, In all three cases the new coverage overlaps with that already afforded these installations by the MARIEL (2300N-8249W) or the HAVANA (2309N-8213W) sites. However, both Artemisa and the Mariel port are now protected by two instead of one site, while the San Antonio de los Banos airfield is now within the perimeter of three sites. This airfield is the headquarters of the Cuban Air Force. Since 15 March 40 of the 42 known MIG-21 jet fighters in Cuba have been deployed there.

b. The abandoned BAHIA HONDA site protected a part of the northern coast of Pinar del Rio Province under the perimeter concept of SAM coverage. The only military installations protected by the site were the four former San Cristobal MRBM sites--two of which are now covered by the MAJANA site. It had also provided secondary and marginal protection for the Guerra cruise-missile site in addition to the primary coverage afforded that installation by the SAM site at MARIEL. The abandonment of the BAHIA HONDA

site opens a gap along the northern coast, but one that includes no important military installations.

5. The major SAM site movements to date and especially the BAHIA HONDA to MAJANA redeployment are evidence of a change in the perimeter concept of air defense coverage to the more traditional Soviet SA-2 practice of "point defense." In line with this, further redeployments of SAM units can be expected.

6. On 30 January a new SAM site was identified at MANAGUA (2259N-8215W). By 4 March permanent facilities were completed, although no missile or related equipment has been observed to date. There is insufficient evidence to conclude that the establishment of the MANAGUA and the new MAJANA sites is related and forms an eventual new pattern of air defense. The slow pace and apparent thoroughness of the construction at the MANAGUA site and its location, which affords virtually identical coverage with that of the HAVANA site and access to heavy air traffic, strongly suggest the new facility may be employed as a training site for Cubans. Collateral reports have also indicated that training of Cubans in SAM operations may be undertaken in this area.

ATTACHMENT: MAP AND CHART

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MAJOR RELOCATIONS OF SAM LAUNCH SITES IN CUBA

Date	From	Distance and Direction	To	Remarks
15 Nov-4 Dec	CABANAS	About 10 n.m. West	MALDONADO	Fills gap in coverage to N and W of original location, and is farther away from US base at Guantanamo. Terrain may also have been a factor
27 Dec-4 Jan	SENADO	About 18 n.m. Southwest	CAMAGUEY	Provides better protection for Camaguey airfield and commo center.
12 Jan-20 Jan	CHAPARRA	About 15 n.m. South	HOLGUIN	Provides better coverage for Soviet armored camp at Holguin and airfield.
23 Mar-25 Mar	BAHIA HONDA	About 30 n.m. Southeast	MAJANA	Improves coverage of Soviet armored camp at Artemisa, San Antonio de los Banos airfield, and Mariel port.

NOTE: Several additional SAM units have made local, short distance moves from unrevetted to revetted sites, and for such reasons as better drainage, more effective radar coverage and as apparent mobility exercises.