

6 April 1961

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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6 April 1961

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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DAILY BRIEF

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***Laos:** [The initial phases of the offensive launched by government forces against Muong Kassy on 5 April were apparently carried out successfully. Some elements of the former government garrison at Tha Thom completed their withdrawal to Paksane on 5 April and one battalion remains about ten miles north of Borikhane.]

[Laotian government spokesmen have expressed seeming readiness to negotiate with Souvanna Phouma and the Pathet Lao toward a government of national unity, but Vientiane apparently has not yet taken a firm position.]

[The Watch Committee at its meeting on 5 April reached the following conclusion concerning Laos:]

[The Soviet reply to the UK apparently reflects a Soviet desire to arrive at a political settlement of the Laos problem. The Soviet response to the British has--after a delay and probably with some reservations--been endorsed by Peiping, Hanoi, and Xieng Kouang, and the Communists apparently envision a cease-fire formally negotiated by the Laotians themselves. This would permit continuing Communist efforts to obtain further military gains during such negotiations.]

[The Bloc continues its logistic support to the Pathet Lao forces by airlift and overland. The Communist occupation of Tha Thom permits these forces to concentrate for operations against Meo guerrilla elements southwest of Xieng Khouang or, alternatively, to increase the threat to Paksane.]

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[Recent Soviet airdrop activity suggests that the Communists are preparing to step up their activity in northern Luang Prabang Province and in the Vang Vieng area. It is too early to assess the result of the government's initiative in the Muong Kassy area.]

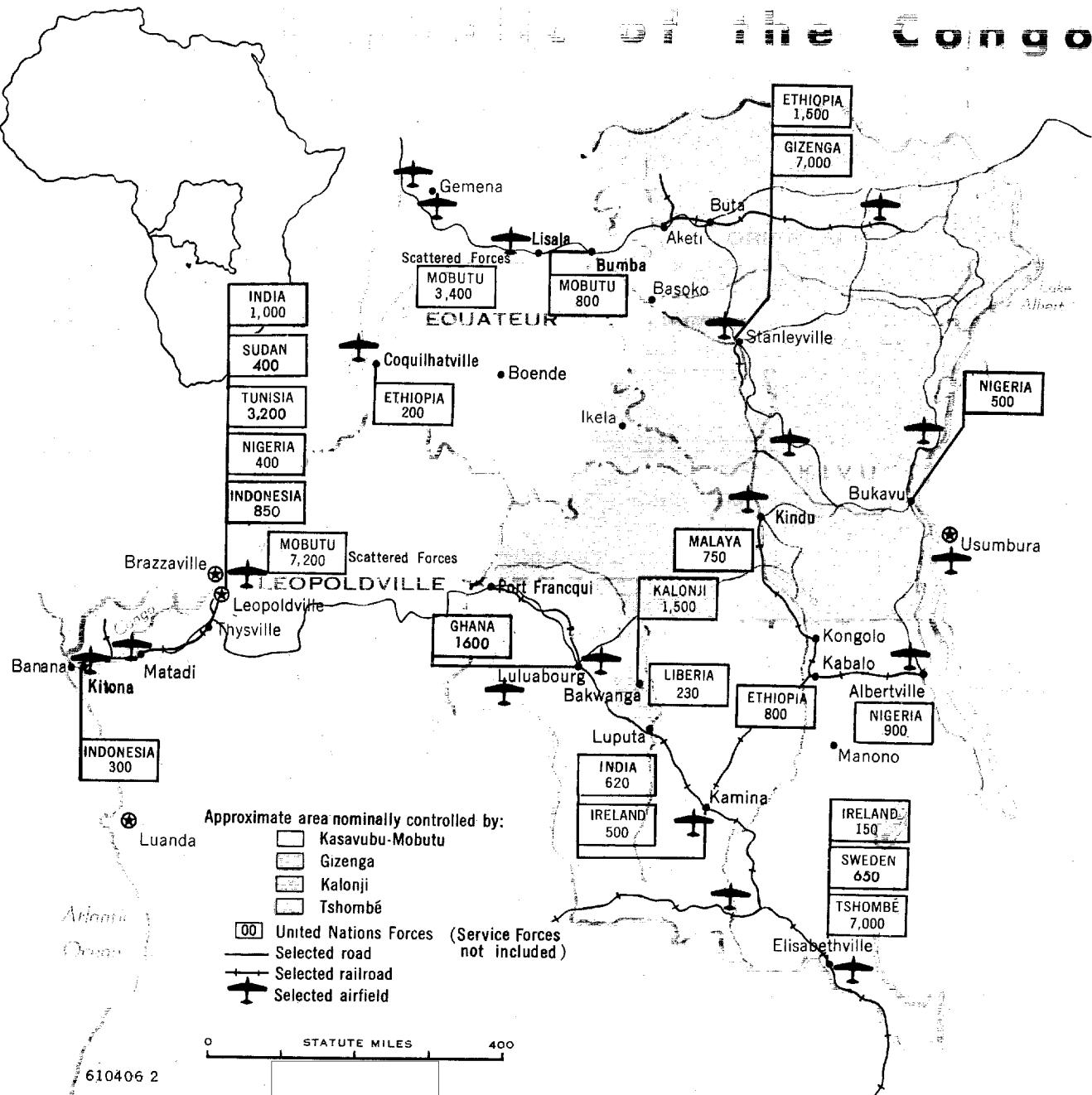
[Although we have seen no movements of North Vietnamese or Chinese Communist military forces or equipment which would indicate an immediate intention to intervene overtly in the Laotian conflict it is probable that they are in a position to take such action rapidly and with little warning.]

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Congo: [Preliminary indications are that Congolese officials in Leopoldville remain opposed to the return of any UN troops to Matadi and may reject Hammarskjold's compromise to send a token police force to the port.]

Kasa-vubu refused to alter his previous position that UN civilians would not be molested in the port but that the presence of military contingents would inflame both the civilian population and the Congolese troops there.]

(Backup, Page 3) (Map)

South Vietnam: [President Diem, whose re-election on 9 April seems assured, faces the danger of another non-Communist coup triggered by dissatisfied junior army officers unless he implements promised post-election reforms to raise the army's efficiency and to gain popular support. The officers are discontented over the government's failure to check Communist guerrilla successes. The confusion following a successful non-Communist move against Diem would be readily exploitable by the Communists in pressing for some kind of "political solution" for divided Vietnam.]

(Backup, Page 5)

[The Watch Committee at its meeting on 5 April reached the following conclusion concerning South Vietnam:]

[There are continuing indications that the Viet Cong (Communists) in South Vietnam will continue an extensive campaign of guerrilla attacks, sabotage and political terrorism which will increase in intensity as the 9 April South Vietnamese presidential elections approach.]

*USSR-Disarmament: [The head of the Polish UN delegation told an American official that Gromyko, as a result of his interview with Presidential Adviser McCloy on 30 March, is returning to Moscow with the belief that the US is launching a serious disarmament effort. Although Foreign Minister Gromyko repeated to McCloy the standard Soviet criticisms of the US approach to disarmament, he sought to give the impression of]

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[serious interest in achieving progress in the forthcoming negotiations. Gromyko indicated interest in "first-step" measures outlined by McCloy, but contended that partial steps taken independently without a program for complete disarmament would create "disequilibrium." Gromyko took a less positive line in discussing the nuclear test talks, indicating that the Soviet proposal for a tripartite administrator for the control system would be a "sticking point" and admitting this was related to the Soviet demand for revising the UN structure. The Polish delegate subsequently told an American official that he had received the impression from Gromyko that the test ban talks would be "locked," with no real progress until general disarmament negotiations had shown signs of advance.]

(Backup,

Page 7,

UAR-Africa: Cairo is continuing its clandestine financial support of African nationalists.

more than \$140,000 has been turned over to Ugandan, Kenyan, and Northern and Southern Rhodesian nationalist leaders during the past three months.

the UAR also informed its diplomatic missions that while it would support a proposed Ghanaian UN resolution recommending that member nations sever relations with South Africa, it would try to keep open its legation in Johannesburg as "the only official means of contact" between South African nationalists and the outside world.

Cuba-Brazil-Fidel Castro: sought Brazilian support for an Indonesian draft resolution to be submitted in the UN General Assembly on the Cuban complaint against the United States. This draft resolution has not yet been formally presented.

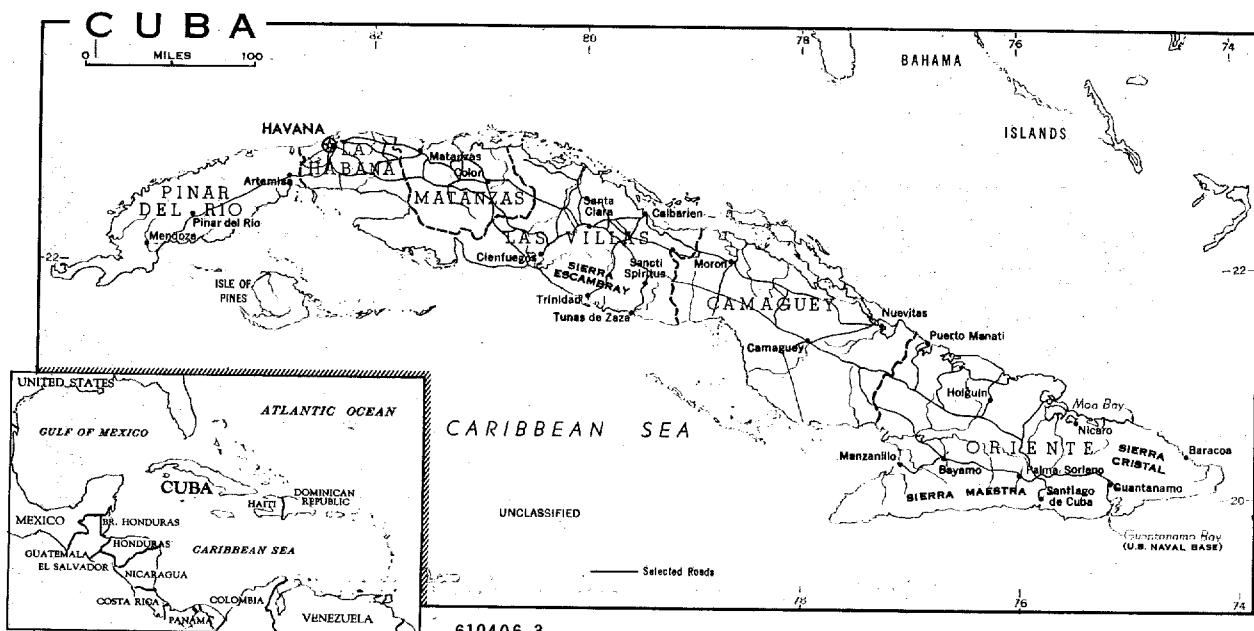
Mexico is willing to support the draft and that Brazilian backing would influence other Latin American governments

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to do likewise. [redacted] Brazil's customary position has been not to refer hemispheric problems to the UN until appeals to the OAS had been exhausted. In reply Castro claimed that the OAS is incapable of defending small countries when their rights "are disregarded by the largest power on the continent." [redacted]

The Cuban delegation in the UN passed up an opportunity on 5 April to press for early consideration of its charges against the US before the General Assembly's main political committee, probably preferring to wait until it had lined up support among a larger number of UN members for a resolution acceptable to Cuba. [redacted]

Cuba: The pace of anti-Castro activity both inside Cuba and among Cuban exiles is mounting. [redacted] 710

[redacted] new outbreaks of guerrilla activity in Oriente Province and in the border area of Las Villas and Matanzas provinces since mid-March. [redacted] considerable information,

[redacted] on insurgent plans in various provinces. Clandestine anti-Castro radio stations have referred to plans for coordinated acts of sabotage in Havana. [redacted] (Backup, Page 9) (Map)

WATCH COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

- A. [No change from last week.]
- B. [No change from last week.]
- C. [LAOS: Carried on Page i of the Daily Brief.]

[SOUTH VIETNAM: Carried on Page iii of the Daily Brief.]

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~~TOP SECRET~~The Situation in Laos

[General Phoumi plans to arrive in Bangkok today, apparently to see Premier Sarit. The purpose of this visit has not been disclosed.]

[The Soviet chargé d'affaires in Paris told [redacted] although the USSR would not accept the US-UK position that a cease-fire is a prerequisite for a conference, Moscow anticipates that hostilities will soon diminish since all major powers are now agreed on the future neutralization of Laos. He stated, however, that he does not expect the Soviet Union to stop supplying Pathet Lao forces in Laos before it is firmly established that the US has stopped supplying the Phoumi forces. The Soviet chargé also expressed the view that the Soviet delegation to a conference would be headed by a deputy foreign minister [redacted]]

[all Soviet officials in high spirits concerning the turn of events in Laos, with one boasting that the US had shifted its policy and had made repeated overtures to Souvanna Phouma to visit Washington.]

[After waiting three days while Western press services quoted Chinese Communist Foreign Minister Chen Yi as threatening to counter any SEATO move in Laos with Chinese troops, Peiping on 5 April broadcast its own version of the remarks Chen Yi made at the Djakarta airport last Sunday. According to this broadcast, Chen Yi said, "We will not remain idle" if SEATO enters Laos and if Chinese help is requested by Souvanna Phouma's "lawful government." While the Peiping broadcast has made Chen Yi's warning more ambiguous, it did repeat his reference to the Chinese Nationalist irregulars, to China's border with Laos, and to Chinese intervention in Korea, in such a way as to make it clear that Communist China considers its interests closely linked to the Laotian developments.]

[The Soviet airlift into Xieng Khouang Province continues in the usual pattern of about ten scheduled flights daily. In addition, six flights were scheduled into Phong Saly Province on 6 April.]

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[There were a number of flights into Phong Saly on 3 April, but prior to that date such flights were rare.]

[A possible reinforcement of the airlift is suggested by the arrival on 4 and 5 April of at least ten Chinese Communist military transport aircraft at Hankow in central China. Most of these aircraft came from bases in north China and the movement resembled an influx of transports into Hankow in mid-December 1960 which was associated with support of the airlift into Laos. There is some possibility, however, that Mao Tse-tung is in the vicinity of Hankow and that party leaders may be gathering there for a conference.]

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~~TOP SECRET~~Situation in the Congo

Belgium has notified the UN that it is ready to comply with the United Nations' resolution calling for the withdrawal of Belgian military personnel from the Congo and would in addition assist the United Nations in trying to persuade the Congolese authorities to release Belgian "civilian personnel" serving in the Congo. [The Belgian Foreign Ministry in a note to Sahbani, Hammarskjold's personal representative in Brussels, proposed tripartite conversations among the United Nations, the government of Belgium, and the government of the Congo. It informed the United States ambassador, however, that the present Belgian government, and presumably the next government, would not agree to any withdrawal unless acceptable to the Congolese authorities. The Foreign Ministry also argued that the Belgian Government cannot control Belgian citizens abroad in the employ of a foreign government, an obvious reference to Belgian military officers and advisers for whom it claims the Congolese are responsible. Meanwhile, 20 additional Belgian mercenaries arrived in Elisabethville on 2 April on Sabena via Johannesburg.]

Gizenga's disillusionment with Pierre Mulele, his representative in Cairo, apparently is increasing.

Gizenga strongly criticized Mulele's failure to secure assistance, particularly long-range aircraft and arms, from Stanleyville's "international supporters." He asked Mulele to attend the "conference of chiefs of state at Casablanca"--presumably a reference to the meeting of working-level representatives of the Casablanca powers at Accra on 6 April--in order to "make them understand" Orléans's situation. Asserting that Mulele was maintaining a "silence of death" on important questions, Gizenga said he would not contact "the friendly countries until the arms arrive in Stanleyville."

There has been no indication so far of the results of Kamitatu's trip to Stanleyville. However, the fact that he

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stayed over an extra day suggests that there may be some prospects for a reconciliation between the Gizenga regime and the one in Leopoldville. Negotiations to bring this about may be long and drawn-out, and any settlement which results is likely to be unstable.

The Leopoldville representative of the League of Red Cross Societies has been informed by his Geneva headquarters that the Red Cross will try to arrange a shipment of relief supplies from bloc countries into Orientale Province via the Sudan. It is not clear whether this shipment would be made under direct Red Cross control; if not, it could be used as cover for small amounts of clandestine assistance to the Gizenga regime from the bloc. The Sudan, which has repeatedly said that all aid should be channeled through the UN, turned down a unilateral Soviet Red Cross request in February for permission to send supplies into Stanleyville; however, it might consider granting transit rights if approached by the International Red Cross organization.

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~~SECRET~~Situation in South Vietnam

[The Diem government has hoped that holding presidential elections on schedule in spite of the increase in internal dissidence would increase its popular support. The government has sought to maintain the appearance of fully democratic elections by guaranteeing equal facilities to all three competing tickets; however, Diem's control of the press, of mass organizations, and of government machinery has heavily slanted the campaign in his favor and will undoubtedly provoke Communist charges of fraud.]

[A prominent opposition figure, Phan Huy Quat, recently commented [redacted] that, despite Diem's unnecessary "rigging," he regarded the election as a step forward in South Vietnam's "inevitable" democratization. He added, however, that Diem must follow up by relaxing police and censorship controls.]

[In a 29 March broadcast the Communist "Liberation News Agency" of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam announced that the "self-defense armed forces in the southern area" have been reorganized as the "Liberation Army of South Vietnam." With formal establishment of this military arm of the National Liberation Front, the Communists have taken another step in the development of their subversive apparatus in the South, attempting to create the impression of an indigenous movement which unites both paramilitary and political elements seeking the overthrow of the Diem government.]

[President Diem repeated his intention to make changes in his cabinet following the election, stating that he would include some National Assembly members but no prominent opposition figures. Diem complained particularly that competent officials were reluctant to be appointed to positions in rural areas, where the Communists have conducted an assassination campaign. He stated that he hoped eventually to proceed with plans to hold elections at the village level. Although Diem has in recent]

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[months made several gestures toward increased effectiveness and liberalization of his regime, he indicates a continued reluctance to undertake basic political reforms or to dissolve his reliance on a trusted political clique.] [redacted]

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Soviet Position on Disarmament and Nuclear Test Ban

[Gromyko's statements together with remarks by the head of the Polish UN delegation, Deputy Foreign Minister Winiewicz, suggest that, although the USSR will not abandon its insistence on an agreement in principle to general disarmament, Moscow may be considering a procedural move to meet US emphasis on giving priority to "first-step" measures in negotiations. Winiewicz claimed that Gromyko told Zorin that the fact that the American suggestions for immediate measures were not new did not lessen their importance. Prior to these conversations he had told Western officials at the UN that Moscow was thinking in terms of two parallel negotiations, one on complete and general disarmament and the other on first-stage measures.]

[On the nuclear test ban conference, Gromyko maintained the generally pessimistic line taken by the Soviet delegation at Geneva. He said that the USSR hoped for new things to be brought out by the US at Geneva, and would make a serious study of the proposals. He added, however, that Moscow was not impressed thus far. As an example he stated that the USSR did not consider Western reduction in proposed control posts in the USSR from 21 to 19 an important gesture. Gromyko admitted that the proposal for a tripartite administrator reflected the USSR's desire for a veto but contended that Moscow would be "reasonable" in the operation of the veto.]

[The Polish delegate's remark on the link between the test ban talks and the general disarmament negotiations may foreshadow a Soviet move to merge these issues. Since the talks between Khrushchev and Ambassador Thompson on 9 March, Soviet officials have minimized the importance of a test ban. The chief Soviet delegate at Geneva told the British delegation that a test ban was of "extremely limited significance," and Gromyko made a point of asking Ambassador Stevenson whether the US considered a test ban agreement a condition to agreement on general disarmament, which Gromyko viewed as a separate although "related subject." An Izvestia correspondent in Geneva also told an American official that if the US]

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[failed to produce "something new" at the test ban talks the issue would be put into the framework of general disarmament. The UN delegation at Geneva feels that in view of the forthcoming disarmament talks the next French test may be taken as a possible pretext for a Soviet move to terminate the talks--on the grounds that a test ban by the three powers in itself would not contribute to disarmament--and to propose a merger of a test ban with other disarmament plans. Tsarapkin's recent line that only comprehensive disarmament would warrant far-reaching controls probably would be used by Moscow to justify such a move.]

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~~SECRET~~Insurgent Activity Increasing in Cuba

Skirmishes between government forces and a number of small insurgent bands in eastern Oriente Province are occurring almost daily.

[redacted] there are more than a thousand insurgents but believe they lack sufficient arms and equipment. Government forces in the area, mostly militia, are estimated to number between 8,000 and 10,000.

[redacted] frequent skirmishes. [redacted] action had been initiated that day against insurgents near the Las Villas - Matanzas provincial border and that Fidel Castro had traveled to the area, presumably to supervise the operations.

[redacted] government forces had lost contact with the insurgents by 3 April.

After seven months, guerrillas are still active in the Escambray Mountains of Las Villas Province, although government counteraction since early this year has considerably reduced their numbers and mobility.

[redacted] while the militiamen sent against the guerrillas were usually effective because of their numerical strength, they are neither well trained nor greatly disposed to fight. [redacted] the government faced the constant threat of defection by the militiamen, but that this was minimized by the immediate arrest or transfer of malcontents. [redacted] most militia units in the Escambray are commanded by Communist officers of the regular army.

[redacted] conversations with militiamen during the past several months had convinced him that many of them are awaiting a good opportunity to defect.

Comment by Cuban media on the US "White Paper" issued on 3 April has been violent, and the official newspaper Revolucion described it as "a product worthy of the imperialist sewer in which the peoples of America will fling the garbage where they will one day fling imperialism itself."

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The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration

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