

CONFIDENTIAL
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COMMANDING OFFICER,
PATROL SQUADRON FIVE

SERIAL 0103

15 DECEMBER 1962

CIBAN QUARANTINE

REPORT OF SUPPORT OF CUBAN MISSILE
CRISIS OPERATIONS.

DECLASSIFIED

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

NAVAL AIR FORCE
PATROL SQUADRON FIVE

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

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From: Commanding Officer, Patrol Squadron FIVE
To: Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet
Via: (1) Commander Fleet Air Wing ELEVEN
(2) Commander Fleet Air Wings, U.S. Atlantic Fleet
(3) Commander Anti-Submarine Warfare Forces, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

Subj: Historical and Public Information Material (U)

Ref: (a) COMNAVAIRLANT General Message 103, DTG 1931Z of 29 OCT 1962
(b) COMFAIRWINGSLANT Notice 05700 of 2 NOV 1962

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), the following report is submitted for the period 22 October through 15 November 1962.

2. Summary of Operations

a. During the period of this report, Patrol Squadron FIVE flew a total of 971.4 hours in direct support of the Cuban Quarantine. 112 ASW and ship surveillance sorties were conducted by this command; 101 of these missions were performed with a BRAVO ordnance load. The conduct of these missions under near combat conditions demonstrated to this command the flexibility, mobility and capability of the current VP organization to function effectively during a national emergency.

3. Narrative

a. Shortly after 1200 on Monday, 22 October 1962, Patrol Squadron FIVE received instructions from Commander Fleet Air Wing ELEVEN to discontinue local flight operations at the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Florida. Squadron aircraft, which had been conducting routine anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training in the Jacksonville operating areas, were immediately recalled. At afternoon quarters, orders were received to prepare for immediate deployment. Squadron personnel began pack-up operations and at 2300 that evening, all squadron equipment was awaiting airlift. By 0200, 23 October, six Patrol Squadron FIVE aircraft were conducting Caribbean surveillance in transit to the U.S. Naval Station, Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. At noon on the same day, additional sorties were launched from the Puerto Rican base and Patrol Squadron FIVE, in coordination with other U.S. naval forces, commenced day and night quarantine surveillance of the Caribbean area as Task Element 81.7.8.1.

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b. During the conduct of a maritime surveillance patrol on the morning of 24 October 1962, a Patrol Squadron FIVE aircraft gained visual contact with the Soviet tanker BUCHAREST out of Odessa. This was the first known contact with this vessel in the Caribbean area. Complete photographic coverage was obtained and continued surveillance was maintained until the BUCHAREST was intercepted by U.S. Navy surface forces.

c. In accordance with directives received from CTU 81.7.8, ASW coverage commenced at noon on 27 October and continued throughout this reporting period. On 31 October 1962, LT Chester W. BURCHETT, commanding Patrol Squadron FIVE Crew Four, relieved another Patrol Squadron FIVE aircraft which had been maintaining contact with an unknown submerged submarine, designated C-26. LT BURCHETT maintained continuous contact utilizing Magnetic Anomaly Detection Vector (MADVEC) tactics in coordination with the USS CECIL, DDR 835. After performing these tracking tactics for one hour and fifteen minutes, the Patrol Squadron FIVE aircraft was granted permission to begin MAD cloverleaf tactics. During this phase of operation, the Soviet "FOXTROT" class submarine, number 911, surfaced in the immediate vicinity of datum. The undersea capability of the Soviet submarine had evidently been exhausted through continued restriction of its movement by air and surface units since the evening of 29 October 1962. Complete photographic coverage and other intelligence data was obtained.

d. During this period Patrol Squadron FIVE quarantine operations were continuously expanded to encompass the greater part of the Puerto Rico, Cuba oceanic areas. Missions, under combat conditions, were being launched from Jacksonville, Florida, Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. At 0900 on 6 November, a Patrol Squadron FIVE aircraft, operating out of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, located and photographed the Soviet cargo vessel, DIVINOGORSK. This ship carried four missiles and several military vehicles under canvas covering. From the intelligence information gained by this particular sortie, it was determined that the DIVINOGORSK was the first Soviet vessel to depart Cuba with missiles aboard.

e. Patrol Squadron FIVE has enjoyed the finest of command relationships during this reporting period. Within the framework of the quarantine forces and the normal chain of command, Patrol Squadron FIVE was extended outstanding support. The cooperation and team work of Patrol Squadron SEVEN and FIVE, as Task Element 81.7.8.1, exemplified the inherent flexibility and standardization of technique achieved by the Southern Maritime Air Group, Atlantic. The increased amount of flight hours acquired by flight crew members of this command enhanced crew coordination and the ability of the unit to function well under all situations encompassing the areas of responsibility associated with Patrol Squadron capabilities.

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