Soviets Deny Building Cuba Submarine Base

By Michael Getler Washington Post Staff Writer

and emphatically denied yes-the United States "will conterday that it was constructing tinue to watch the situation a base for missile-firing sub- around the Cuban port of Cienmarines in Cuba.

standing reached between the governments of the U.S.S.R.

During the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the Soviets agreed to pull their missiles out of say was an American pledge not to invade Cuba.

At the State Department, spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said the department considered the Tass statement

The Soviet Union officially "to be positive," but added that

fuegos closely.

The Tass report came just An official government The Tass report came just statement distributed by Tass, hours before the Pentagon anthe Soviet news agency, said nounced that a Soviet subma-"The Soviet Union is not build- rine tender that had been in ing a military base in Cuba port in Cienfuegos since Sept. and is not doing anything that 9 had left Saturday morning would contradict the under- and was heading eastward toward open sea.

High-level defense officials and the United States in 1962." say the departure of the tender is the most significant break in the activities around Cienfuegos since the White House and the Pentagon both pub-Cuba in return for what they licly accused the Soviets on Sept. 25 of possibly preparing the harbor there to service Russian missile-firing subma-

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Cuba Base Plan Denied by Russia

BASE, From A1

Assistant Secretary of Defense Daniel Z. Henkin said yesterday that departure of the tender "makes it less likely" that the Cuban port could be used in this fashion.

also believe the tender's de-Soviet desire not to damage in fact building such a base. either the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks, which are to sible, as some administration reopen in Helsinki Nov. 2, or forthcoming meetings in New did indeed intend to put such York this Friday and the fol- a facility in, but may now lowing Monday between U.S. have been dissuaded by stern Secretary of State William P. U.S. warnings. Rogers and Soviet Foreign Minister Andri Gromyko.

submarine bases overseas at port, but it is impossible to tell Holy Loch, Scotland, and Rota, at this time what purpose they Spain, both have tenders in serve. port at all times, and the continued presence of the Soviet tender in Cuba had increased speculation that a permanent sub base of this type as to e

In a news conference Monday, Defense Secretary Vivin R. Laird pointed out that the two U.S. bases were well known before the U.S. and U.S.S.R. agreed to meet last fall to discuss strategic arms limitation.

the talks are under way would sion on Capitol Hill, failed to be viewed as "a very serious act," Laird said.

really intended to set up a Foreign Affairs Subcommittee sub base in Cuba, or still har on Inter-American Affairs bor such plans, remains open that had scheduled the meetto considerable doubt.

base construction is going for-House nor the Pentagon has Cuban affair, but I do find it specifically with "Yankeerines of the type that already national and international sefrom bases in Russia.

privately that there is no such press."

evidence and several senators, E including J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), Clifford Case (R-N.J.), to and Frank Church (D-Idaho), r all of whom are normally skeptical of Pentagon claims, emerged from a special Senate Foreign Relations Com-Though defense officials re- mittee briefing by the Defense main cautious about Russian Intelligence Agency Oct. 1 and intentions in the area, they reported insufficient evidence was presented, in their view, parture may be linked to a to conclude the Soviets were

On the other hand, it is possources say, that the Soviets

There are, according to intelligence officials, some new The two major U.S. Polaris buildings at the Cienfuegos

> are still in a position to change their plans for Cienfuegos before the U.S. can gather any actual evidence of sub base construction. Unlike the 1962 missile crisis, no before-and-after photos of activity in Cuba have been made public.

Further evidence that the situation was cooling off, militarily if not politically, came yesterday when administration Any attempt by the Soviets officials, invited to testify on to change the balance now that the Cuban affair in closed sesshow up.

Rep. Dante B. Fascell (D-Whether the Soviets ever Fla.), Chairman of the House ings, said in an interview:

Though Laird said Monday "I am not suggesting that that "there is evidence naval there are any domestic political motives present in the adward," neither the White ministration's approach to the claimed or produced any hard exceedingly strange that the evidence linking activity there discussion of a matter which is alleged to be of such grave class," missile-firing subma- importance as to threaten our patrol off the U.S. east coast curity should be conducted strictly between high admin-Intelligence officials say istration officials and