

Soviets Deny Shipping U. S. Grain to Cuba

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WASHINGTON — The Soviet Union has denied an American ship captain's allegation that it is exporting United States grain to Cuba, a state department spokesman said Wednesday.

Soviet embassy charge d'affaires George Kornienko told state department officials Tuesday the allegation was "groundless" and seemingly voiced to "provoke trouble" in retaliation for difficulties the captain encountered in a Russian port, the spokesman reported.

The allegation that Russia was transshipping American grain to Cuba came a few days ago from Capt. Arthur H. Fertig of the S. S. Sister Katingo which unloaded a cargo of Russian-purchased United States grain last week at the Soviet Black Sea port of Novorossisk. The American-Russian grain purchase agreement bans Soviet Transshipment of any of the grain to Cuba.

Capt. Fertig reportedly told American authorities he saw a Soviet ship being loaded at Novorossisk with grain he "assumed" to be from the United States. Russian stevedores told him the ship was going to Cuba, he said.