

October 27, 1962

**Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba A.I.
Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry**

Citation:

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Summary:

Castro's response to a Soviet Foreign Ministry telegram regarding the prohibition of special arms and possible US invasion.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

We have met with Fidel Castro and Dorticos, and have informed them of what you communicated in your telegram.

Castro said that the Cuban leaders would discuss the form and substance of his statement on the issues broached by you, and that this would be done in the briefest possible time.

The letter to U Thant, they said, has already been sent, and for that reason the issue you put forth would be explained in Fidel Castro's speech.

Castro and Dorticos declared that the only difficult point would be finding an appropriate form for the declaration of the prohibition on special arms installation projects, since the Americans are following the progress of those projects with the help of reconnaissance flights, and know a lot about them.

They said that an appropriate form would nonetheless be found, and that a likely condition would be a prohibition on similar projects in Guantanamo base as well.

Referring to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's letter to Kennedy of 27 October, Castro said that it had been composed with great diplomatic skill, and that it would have a huge influence on global public opinion.

Moreover it puts the USA government in a difficult position, and exposes the illegality of its actions.

Castro supposes that the USA will not agree to the elimination of bases in Turkey, which will make it easier to justify before public opinion the presence of special weaponry in Cuba.

Castro said, however, that concise information supplied by the agency and the evening newspaper on the basic content of this letter brought about symptoms of a certain confusion in various sectors of the Cuban population and among some members of the military. A number of officers have spoken to him about it, asking whether it constitutes a rejection by the USSR of its former obligations.

Castro believes that the publication tomorrow of the full text of the letter will disperse these doubts, and he will take the first opportunity to explain its main content in a way that is accessible to the public.

After receiving Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's letter and your report, Castro began to assess the situation more calmly and realistically, believing that the opportunity had arrived for a peaceful settlement of the Cuban conflict. He nevertheless continues to believe that the danger of sudden attack still exists as before.

Castro told how a U-2 airplane had been shot down from an altitude of 21 kilometers, and that the Cuban military powers had collected its fragments and the corpse of its pilot.

Meanwhile it has been announced in the newspapers that an invading plane of unknown nationality has been shot down. According to American press reports, USA military forces have acknowledged the plane's downing, and have brought to a state of readiness a formation of paratroopers amounting to 14,000 men, which is allegedly intended to be launched over Cuba.

Castro said that in the event of such an attack, full fire would be turned against the

aggressor, and that he was sure of success. During this conversation I informed Castro and Dorticos in an appropriate way of the content of your letter, telling him that in the present circumstances it would not be fitting to aggravate the situation and initiate provocations.

Castro said that he understood the crucial nature of these actions, but that, considering the rise in the army's martial spirit and the Americans' warning, our friends were compelled to take such a step.

27.X.62 ALEKSEEV