

Mikoyan Telegram to the CC CPSU (no. 1856)
November 19, 1962

CC CPSU.

Sunday night, on invitation from President Dorticos, I was at his palace with the Ambassador, and spent about five hours there. From there side, there were Guevara, Aragones, Rodriguez and Roa. Fidel and Raul were out of Havana.

In the beginning of the conversation I presented our position regarding to the Brazilian resolution on a nuclear-free zone in Latin America, as I was instructed by Moscow. They agreed to our considerations, telling me that had already discussed the issue and came to the same conclusions. We agreed to entrust Minister Roa, Alekseyev and Bazykin to coordinate common tactics tomorrow. In connection with my statement that it mainly relates to the Cuban interests, and that we are interested in it mainly as members of the United Nations, but not directly, Guevara expressed his feeling that the Soviet Union had a direct interest because according to unconfirmed information the United States was building a base to launch missiles in Paraguay; altogether the United States could build around fifty of such bases in Latin America.

I responded to Guevara that such bases are not a threat to us, that the long-range missiles deployed on the territory of the USSR are capable of striking and destroying the US. The presence of American bases in the countries of Latin America will only mean that we will target those bases with our missiles just like we did in relation to their missiles in Europe and Asia.

They did not argue with that.

Then I stated that I had important information from Moscow and the issues that need our collective discussion relating to the fastest resolution of the Cuban crisis. I added that this should be done with participation of Fidel Castro, not without him. Dorticos said that today he did not have any contact with Fidel and that he will try to get in touch with him. He immediately called somewhere, and then stated that Fidel was out of town but that they would find him and pass the message to him. In anticipation of that we conducted the conversation without touching upon the questions, which we should discuss per your instructions. To my question to Guevara—whether he visited the provinces, as he was saying yesterday, and had come back already—he responded that no, the situation turned out not to be as complicated as they expected, and so he did not go there. He noted that on Sunday there were only two overflights by U-2s at high altitude. (Next day, on Monday, when I am writing this telegram, it became known that for the first time, they opened fire only today, at one American plane, which was flying in the area of Santiago at the altitude of 1000 meters, but without any results).

I stated that the Americans are of course afraid not of the Cuban militia, but of the Soviet long-range missiles. Guevara agreed.

Then I used an opportune moment to criticize the Chinese position on the Cuban issue—blasted the contents of their latest articles, emphasized that they were ahead of everybody in the number of letters of sympathy, number of rallies, they juggle with revolutionary phrases,

entreat the Cubans to eliminate the U.S. imperialism on their own. They do not render any practical assistance to Cuba within their capabilities. Why wouldn't they, for example, to distract attention away from Cuba, start military actions around Taiwan, even in the fashion like they have done, nobody knows for what reason, in 1958. They could have overtaken the Portuguese base in Macao on the Chinese territory next to Canton, like Nehru had done when he captured Goa. This way they could have dealt a blow to a U.S. NATO ally. After all, they could have seized Hong Kong—the British base, which would have been a blow against the U.S. main ally.

And why couldn't have they sent two extra ships with rice to Cuba, knowing that you don't have enough rice? According to the information of your own ministry, they are even late with the shipments of food products that they had to deliver by the trade agreement.

What, apart from laughter, could be one's reaction to the fact that the officials of the Chinese embassy in Havana were donating blood, for which there is no need whatsoever, plus Cuba has enough of its own donated blood.

What a contrast to all that is the fact that the Presidium of the CC [CPSU], upon learning about Kennedy's declaration, which contained the threat of an attack on Cuba, did as its very first step at its session—it told [Defense] Minister Malinovsky to step out of the meeting room and to give orders to bring all the armed forces and missile launchers of the Soviet Union to battle readiness and to give orders to cde. Pavlov to prepare all the Soviet military means and personnel in Cuba to repel an attack of the imperialists together with the Cubans.

Thousands of Soviet people stationed in Cuba, were ready to give not just some donation of blood, but all their blood and their lives for the defense of Cuba. Here Dorticos interjected that they never doubted that the Soviet people would fight courageously alongside the Cubans defending the revolution.

It was obvious that these statements against the Chinese position had a great impression on them. In the end, Dorticos asked the following question:

What connection do you see between our disagreements and the positions of the Chinese Communist party? I responded that we did not confuse your line [with the Chinese] and we do not connect it with the Chinese position. We consider you such good friends and such good Marxists that we cannot allow ourselves to identify your position with the Chinese position.

Then the conversation shifted to the issues of forming a Marxist-Leninist party in Cuba, Dorticos spoke extensively about it, and also the secretary for organizational issues Aragonés.

Our points of view on this issue converged and there is no need to take the CC's time by the retelling that part of the conversation here. Time was passing and we still did not have any information when Fidel would arrive, and so we went to watch movies right there, as was suggested by Dorticos. At midnight it became known that Fidel had just arrived in Havana and due to the late hour was asking to move our conversation to tomorrow.

Today it became known that they want to meet at 3:30.

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A. Mikoyan

[Source: Personal Archive of Sergo Mikoyan donated to the National Security Archive.
Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya for the National Security Archive]