

New Evidence on the Cuban Missile Crisis: More Documents from the Russian Archives

by James G. Hershberg

The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 continues to exert an intense fascination on historians, political scientists, journalists, and the general public, and—as apparently the world’s closest brush to thermonuclear war—is likely to continue to do so. Over the past decade, the study of this crisis has expanded to encompass a major influx of new sources and perspectives, primarily stemming from the declassification of new U.S. (and British) documents, but also the addition of Soviet and then Cuban archival materials and perspectives—a process expedited by international scholarly projects as well as the anti-communist upheavals that led to the (partial) opening of Russian archives.¹

The *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* has previously reported on various new findings regarding the crisis—known to Russians as the “Caribbean Crisis” and Cubans as the “October Crisis”—particularly in issue no. 5 (Spring 1995), which featured an extensive compilation of translated documents from the Russian Foreign Ministry archives in Moscow.²

In this issue, the *Bulletin* presents more translated materials from that repository—the Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVPRF)—documenting various aspects of Soviet policy during the events of the fall of 1962. Most were declassified by Soviet/Russian authorities in 1991-1992 and provided to NHK Japanese television in connection with a documentary on the Cuban Missile Crisis aired to mark the 30th anniversary of the event in October 1992; Prof. Philip Brenner (American University), one of the consultants to the show, in turn, subsequently gave copies of the documents to CWIHP and the National Security Archive—a non-governmental research institute and declassified documents repository based at George Washington University—where they are now deposited and available for research. That collection also contains photocopies of some of the same documents that were separately obtained from AVPRF by Raymond L. Garthoff (Brookings Institution) with the Archive’s assistance.

The translations into English came primarily from two sources. Many of the AVPRF documents obtained by NHK were translated by Vladimir Zaemsky of the Russian Foreign Ministry, who granted permission for their use here. For most of the rest of the documents, the *Bulletin* is grateful to Philip Zelikow, Associate Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, and Harvard’s Center for Science and International Affairs, for commissioning translations from John Henriksen of Harvard. (Prof. Zelikow, the co-author, with Condoleezza Rice, of *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Harvard University Press, 1995), is currently involved with two Cuban Missile Crisis-related publication projects, a revision of Graham Allison’s *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, originally published in 1970, and, with Prof. Ernest R. May of Harvard, an edited compilation of transcripts of declassified tape recordings of “Excomm” meetings involving President John F. Kennedy and senior advisors during the crisis, which were recently released by the Kennedy Library in Boston.) In addition, Vladislav M. Zubok, a Russian scholar based at the National Security Archive, translated the records of the two conversations of Soviet Politburo member Anastas Mikoyan (with U Thant and John McCloy) in New York on 1 November 1962, and CWIHP Director David Wolff translated a conversation between Mikoyan and Robert Kennedy.

The translations themselves are broken into three sections: 1) before the crisis, 14 September-21 October 1962 (although for Kennedy and his advisors the crisis began on October 16, when the president was informed that a U.S. U-2 spy plane had photographed evidence of Soviet missile sites under construction in Cuba, for the Soviets the crisis only started on October 22, when Kennedy announced the discovery and the American blockade of Cuba in a televised address); 2) the crisis itself, 22-28 October 1962 (from Kennedy’s speech to Moscow’s announcement of its agreement to withdraw the missiles under United Nations supervision in exchange for Washington’s lifting of the blockade, its pledge not to attack Cuba, and its private assurance that American Jupiter missiles in Turkey would shortly also be removed); and 3) the aftermath, 28 October-10 December 1962 (which included a period of wrangling between Washington and Moscow—and between Moscow and Havana—over the crisis’ settlement, especially over the terms of U.N. inspection of the missile removal and the inclusion of Soviet IL-28 bombers in the weapons to be pulled out, which was not finally nailed down, permitting the blockade to be lifted, until November 20).

For the most part, unfortunately, these materials shed little light on the actual process of decision-making at the highest levels of the Kremlin, and minutes or notes of the discussions among Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev and his associates during the crisis have still not emerged.³ The Russian Foreign Ministry documents did include top-level correspondence between Khrushchev and Kennedy, and between Khrushchev and Castro, but these have already been published elsewhere⁴ and are omitted from the selection below, as are other documents containing material already available to researchers, such as translations of press reports, correspondence between Khrushchev and U.N. Secretary U Thant (and between Khrushchev and British philosopher Bertrand Russell), and cables to Soviet diplomats circulating or reiterating public Soviet positions.

Nevertheless, the Russian archival materials presented here make fascinating reading for anyone interested in the missile crisis, in Soviet or Cuban foreign policy, in crisis politics or diplomacy generally, in some of the leading characters involved in the drama (such as Robert Kennedy, Fidel Castro, Mikoyan, and U Thant), or in reassessing the accuracy and efficacy of American policy and perceptions during perhaps the Cold War’s most perilous passages. For the most part, they consist of Soviet cables from three diplomatic venues (with occasional instructions from “the center,” or Moscow):

* the *Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C.*, including reports from the USSR's newly-arrived ambassador to the United States, Anatoly F. Dobrynin, on the situation in Washington and his meetings with leading personages, and from Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko on his conversation with Kennedy on October 18;

* the *United Nations in New York*, from which USSR ambassador Valerian Zorin reported on debates in the Security Council, and on contacts with other delegates and U.N. officials, and then more senior Soviet officials sent to handle the diplomacy of the settlement, such as Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily V. Kuznetsov and Mikoyan, reported on their negotiations with U.S. negotiators John J. McCloy and Adlai Stevenson as well as conversations with U Thant;

* and the *Soviet Embassy in Havana*, from which USSR Ambassador Aleksandr Alekseev reported on Cuban developments, including the fervor gripping the country when it seemed war might be imminent, the leadership's angry reaction when Khrushchev accepted Kennedy's request to withdraw the missiles without advance consultation with Castro, and the difficult conversations which ensued as Soviet officials, in particular Mikoyan, tried to mollify the upset Cubans and at the same time secure Havana's acquiescence to the measures Moscow had accepted in order to resolve the crisis.

The fact that almost all of the documents below came from the Foreign Ministry archive should induce some caution among readers seeking an understanding of Soviet policy regarding the crisis. Not surprisingly, for instance, they illuminate diplomatic aspects of the events far more than, for instance, either military or intelligence aspects. In fact, the Russian Defense Ministry has declassified a substantial amount of material on "Operation Anadyr"—the code-name for the Soviet missile deployment to Cuba—and other military actions related to the crisis, and the *Bulletin* plans to present some of those materials, with translation, annotation, and commentary by Mark Kramer (Harvard University), in a future issue.⁵ As for Soviet intelligence archives, these have not been opened to researchers except on a highly selective basis; however, a book scheduled for publication in 1997 by Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali is expected to draw on these sources. Finally, as noted above, documentation on decision-making at the highest level of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU) remains classified, presumably in the Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF).

It is not possible to provide a comprehensive commentary on the significance of the documents, both because of space limitations and also because they may be used by researchers for so many different purposes—not only historians of the Cold War but political scientists, specialists in bureaucratic politics, nuclear theory, and "crisis management," psychologists, specialists in U.S., Soviet, and Cuban foreign policy, biographers of key figures, and many others have looked to the Cuban Missile Crisis for answers and illumination. Best read in conjunction with the other Russian documents published in *Bulletin 5* and elsewhere, as well as American materials, the documents below are offered merely as useful raw primary source material rather than as evidence for any particular interpretation. Nevertheless, some preliminary reactions can be offered on a few issues.

Pre-Crisis U.S. Military and Covert Policies Toward Cuba

One issue of vital importance during the run-up to the crisis on which the documents here (and in *Bulletin 5*) provide some evidence is the question of how the Soviets perceived the Kennedy Administration's policies and actions toward Cuba, particularly Washington's covert operations against the Castro regime and the likelihood that it would take more direct military action. They clearly show that Moscow's representatives noted, and blamed the United States government in general and the Central Intelligence Agency in particular for, what it called the "piratical raids" by anti-Castro Cuban exile groups being carried out with U.S. support against the island. Although one does not find specific references to "Operation Mongoose"—the code-name for the massive CIA covert operation undertaken with the aim of toppling Castro after the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961—the reports of Ambassador Alekseev in Havana and Ambassador Dobrynin in Washington in September and early October 1962 show that Moscow had no doubt as to who was responsible for what the former called the "landing of counter-revolutionary bands of spies and arms" and "constant acts of provocation."⁶ Dobrynin's cable of 15 October, for instance, lays out the role of the CIA in supporting actions of the exile group "Alpha 66."

However, the documents suggest that the Soviets had only a general knowledge of "Operation Mongoose"—although Soviet military intelligence (GRU) archives might well contain more detailed reports—and Moscow remained uncertain as to the significance of the American support of the harassment operations—i.e., whether they presaged a direct U.S. military intervention to overthrow Castro—right up to the eve of the crisis. As the crisis approached, however, Soviet officials appeared to feel more assured that U.S. military action against Cuba was not imminent (which to those in the know in Moscow signified that the secret deployment of missiles could proceed safely). In a document published in *Bulletin 5*, Foreign Minister Gromyko, in fact, cabled Moscow after meeting Kennedy on October 18 in the Oval Office—unaware that the American already knew about the Soviet missile bases in Cuba—that "Everything we know about the position of the USA government on the Cuban question allows us to conclude that the overall situation is completely satisfactory... There is reason to believe that the USA is not preparing an intervention and has put its money" on economic sanctions.⁷

The actual Soviet record of the Gromyko-Kennedy conversation, excerpted here, offers readers a chance to follow in detail this duplicity-filled conversation, in which neither man told the other the most important fact in the situation under discussion. Gromyko dutifully criticized Washington for its actions against Cuba, and acknowledged only that Moscow was providing Cuba with "exclusively defensive armaments" which could not "represent a threat to anybody." Kennedy, for his part, with the U-2 photographs of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba under construction lying in his desk drawer, told Gromyko that the United States "take[s] on trust" Soviet statements about the defensive character of the weapons it was shipping to Castro but reiterated his public warnings that "were it otherwise,

the gravest issues would arise.” While stressing that the situation had taken a turn for the worse since July as a result of Moscow’s stepping-up of military aid to Cuba—calling the situation “perhaps the most dangerous since the end of the Second World War”—Kennedy made no mention of the missiles.

After reading the account of the conversation, it is hard to explain Gromyko’s smug assessment that the situation was “completely satisfactory,” other than as a spectacular case of wishful thinking (or a blase memo to mask a more candid assessment relayed through other channels). It is clear, from his repeated statements of concern, that Kennedy was trying to caution Moscow to rethink its adventure without tipping his cards—and perhaps even signalling a possible way out of the crisis that had (so far as Moscow knew) not even begun. Repeatedly assuring Gromyko that the United States had “no intentions to launch an aggression against Cuba,” Kennedy noted pointedly that, “If Mr. Khrushchev addressed me on this issue, we could give him corresponding assurances on that score,” and repeated the offer twice later in the conversation. A little more than a week later, of course, after the world had been brought to the brink, precisely such a declaration from Kennedy would give Khrushchev the fig leaf he needed to swallow his pride and accept the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba.

The Russian documents reveal nothing new on the issue of whether, in fact, the Kennedy Administration had been moving toward taking military action against Cuba even before it discovered the existence of the Soviet nuclear-capable missiles on the island in mid-October. In a previous publication, the current author presented evidence that the U.S. government and military undertook serious contingency planning, and even some preliminary redeployments, in September and the first two weeks of October 1962 toward the objective of achieving, by October 20, “maximum readiness” for either an air strike against or invasion of Cuba, or both, although the article remained agnostic on the issue of whether Kennedy had actually made a decision to attack Cuba or simply wanted the option available.⁸ Recently, a potentially crucial, yet still problematic, piece of evidence from American archives has surfaced to suggest that, literally on the eve of the crisis, the Kennedy Administration was *not* on the verge of imminent military action against Cuba.

At issue is a recently declassified purported fragment of notes of a conversation on the afternoon of Monday, 15 October 1962, between Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor. (At that point, the U-2 photographs taken over Cuba the previous day had not yet been identified as revealing Soviet missile sites under construction, a development that would take place only later that afternoon and evening and be reported to the president the following morning, October 16.) During a discussion of contingency plans concerning Cuba, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) minutes—obtained by the National Security Archive through the Freedom of Information Act—paraphrase McNamara as saying: “President wants no military action within the next three months, but he can’t be sure as he does not control events. For instance, aerial photos made available this morning show 68 boxes on ships that are not believed to be Il-28s and cannot be identified. However, the probabilities are strongly against military action in the next 30 days.”⁹ Similarly, a recently-declassified JCS historical report prepared in 1981 evidently relies on those notes in stating (without citation) that in their meeting on October 15, “the Secretary [McNamara] said that President Kennedy wanted, if possible, to avoid military measures against Cuba during the next three months.”¹⁰

If accurate, the notes would certainly constitute a strong piece of evidence against the hypothesis that the Kennedy Administration believed it was headed toward, let alone desired, a military confrontation with Cuba in the immediate future, just before news of the missiles. The evidence is problematic, however, due to an unfortunate case of destruction of historical evidence by the JCS that apparently makes it impossible to evaluate the context or provenance of McNamara’s reported remarks (see footnote for details).¹¹

Berlin and Cuba

One issue which has long intrigued students of the crisis is the nature of its connection, if any, to the simmering U.S.-Soviet confrontation over Berlin—which had quieted somewhat since the erection of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 and the Checkpoint Charlie confrontation between Soviet and U.S. tanks two months later, but remained unfinished business and a potential flashpoint. Given the centrality of Berlin and Germany to the Cold War in Europe, in fact, some U.S. officials jumped to the conclusion upon the discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba that their deployment was actually a Khrushchevian gambit to distract American attention and energy from Berlin, where Moscow might make its next move. Indeed, during the crisis, a special subcommittee of the White House “Excomm” (Executive Committee) was formed, under the chairmanship of Paul H. Nitze, specifically to assess the situation in Berlin in the event that the crisis spread there, perhaps if the Kremlin applied renewed pressure there in response to U.S. threats or use of military force against Cuba.

Some evidence has surfaced to show that at least some Soviet officials did suggest the option of opening up a Berlin front in response to Kennedy’s speech announcing the blockade of Cuba on October 22. In a toughly-worded cable the next day, Ambassador Dobrynin cabled an analysis from Washington recommending an “appropriate rebuff” that might include “hinting to Kennedy in no uncertain terms about the possibility of repressions against the Western powers in West Berlin (as a first step, the organization of a blockade of ground routes, leaving out for the time being air routes so as not to give grounds for a quick confrontation).”¹² Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Kuznetsov also suggested that Khrushchev respond with a troop build-up around Berlin.¹³ Years later, in his smuggled-out memoirs, Khrushchev blustered that during the crisis, “The Americans knew that if Russian blood were shed in Cuba, American blood would be shed in Germany.”¹⁴ But in fact Khrushchev acted cautiously with regard to Berlin and rejected suggestions to mass Soviet forces around the city.

Instead, a different Berlin connection seems to emerge from the Russian documents—that Soviet leaders had, in September and

early October 1962, deliberately floated the idea of an imminent intensive diplomatic effort (or possibly a renewed superpower showdown) on Berlin, to take place in late November after the U.S. Congressional mid-term elections, in order to distract American attention from Cuba long enough to allow Moscow to complete its secret missile deployment. Such is, at any rate, the strategy that Anastas Mikoyan privately described to Fidel Castro and the Cuban leadership on 4 November 1962 (published in *Bulletin* 5) as the one the Kremlin had followed in the weeks and months preceding the crisis: “We let the Americans know that we wanted to solve the question of Berlin in the nearest future. This was done in order to distract their attention away from Cuba. So, we used a diversionary maneuver. In reality, we had no intention of resolving the Berlin question at that time.”¹⁵ In the memorandum of the Gromyko-Kennedy conversation on October 18, one can see the Soviet Foreign Minister dangling the Berlin bait, suggesting that a summit meeting between Kennedy and Khrushchev take place in the United States “in the second half of November”—when Khrushchev would attend a session of the U.N. General Assembly—“in order to discuss the issues that separate [the USA and USSR] and first of all the questions of the German peace treaty and West Berlin.”¹⁶ Gromyko’s message, in turn, came on the heels of a letter from Khrushchev to Kennedy dated 28 September 1962 threatening to sign a German peace treaty—the same vow that had triggered the Berlin Crisis in November 1958, for it implied an agreement between Moscow and East Berlin that would cut off Western access to West Berlin—but grandly (and ominously) informing Kennedy that in deference to the passions of American domestic politics, “we decided to put the German problem, so to say, on ice until the end of the elections” and will “do nothing with regard to West Berlin until the elections ... [afterwards], apparently in the second half of November, it would be necessary in our opinion to continue the dialogue.”¹⁷ “Some sort of crisis relating to Berlin is clearly brewing now, and we will have to see whether we can surmount it without recourse to military action,” Dobrynin quoted Kennedy as saying in a background meeting with reporters on October 16 in a cable to Moscow three days later.¹⁸ On the same day, with evident satisfaction, Gromyko reported to the CPSU CC after his conversation with Kennedy that in recent days “the sharpness of the anti-Cuban campaign in the USA has subsided somewhat while the sharpness of the West Berlin question has stood out all the more. Newspapers bleat about the approaching crisis vis-a-vis West Berlin, the impending in the very near future of a [Soviet treaty] with the GDR, and so on.” Gromyko even detected a White House-inspired propaganda campaign “to divert public attention from the Cuba issue.”¹⁹

Only afterward did Mikoyan, at least, realize that at the October 18 encounter Kennedy had been playing along with Gromyko just as Gromyko had been deceiving him—as soon as they discovered the missiles, he related to Castro, they “began crying about Berlin,” and both the Soviet Union and United States were talking about the Berlin Crisis but simultaneously knew that the real crisis was about to erupt in Cuba.²⁰

Soviet Perceptions of Washington During the Crisis

While evidence (such as Politburo minutes) necessary to judge the evolution of Kremlin perceptions of Kennedy during the crisis is still lacking, and intelligence assessments remain off-limits, the reports of USSR Ambassador in Washington Dobrynin between 22 and 28 October that have emerged thus far raise some interesting questions about the accuracy and impact of Soviet reporting on its “main enemy” at a critical moment. How is one to evaluate, for example, a cable sent over Dobrynin’s name on 25 October 1962 relaying gossip around the bar of the Washington Press Club at 3 o’clock in the morning to the effect that Kennedy had “supposedly taken a decision to invade Cuba” that night or the next one? Of similarly questionable accuracy was Dobrynin’s “line-up” of hawks and doves within the Kennedy Administration as reported (without giving sources) in a cable of 25 October—listing Robert Kennedy, McNamara, National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy and the military as the most ardent supporters of an attack on Cuba, and Secretary of State Dean G. Rusk and Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon as holding a more “restrained” and “cautious” position; actually, although almost all members of the Excomm shifted their positions during the “13 Days” of the crisis, some more than once, Robert Kennedy and McNamara had been among the less militant, preferring a blockade to an immediate airstrike, while Dillon had more frequently sympathized with military action. Perhaps most interesting, though, in this assessment is the Soviet diplomat’s jaundiced view of John F. Kennedy, who is described as a “hot-tempered gambler” who might be tempted into an “adventurist step” because his reputation, political future, and 1964 re-election had been put at stake.²¹

Many other interesting details emerge from Dobrynin’s accounts—above all the evolution of his back-channel relationship with Robert F. Kennedy, the president’s brother and Attorney General (see box)—but perhaps most interesting are the possibilities such documents offer for reassessing with far more precision how nuclear adversaries perceive (and misperceive) each other during crises.

At the United Nations

The documents from the United Nations also permit a much fuller analysis of the difficult U.S.-Soviet negotiations in New York to work out the terms to resolve the crisis, particularly in combination with the large amount of American documents on the talks between McCloy and various Soviet envoys that have been declassified by the State Department in recent years.²² Issues dealt with at length include the terms of verifying the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba, haggling over which Soviet weapons should be removed under the rubric of “offensive” weapons, and a good deal of give-and-take over the basic divisions between the United States and Cuba. One dog that did *not* bark in New York City was that of U.S. withdrawal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey—a subject that was covered in a special understanding reached between Robert Kennedy and Dobrynin in Washington—and one finds (on November 1) a firm instruction from Gromyko in Moscow to “Comrades” Kuznetsov and Zorin “not in any circumstances” to touch on the Turkish issue (despite its

having been raised only days earlier in Khrushchev's public October 27 letter to Kennedy), "since it is the subject of direct negotiations between Washington and Moscow."

The documents also permit a far fuller analysis of the role of the United Nations, and particularly Acting Secretary General U Thant, in trying to navigate a delicate neutral role between the superpowers and actively seeking a United Nations role in the resolution of the crisis. Writing both Khrushchev and Kennedy to propose compromise measures to assuage the crisis, traveling to Cuba to seek Castro's approval for UN inspection of the missile removals, negotiating with Mikoyan, Kuznetsov, and Zorin over the mechanisms to conclude the dispute, U Thant emerges as a fuller figure, particularly as the Soviets courted his support (by backing his inspection plan) even at the price of additional tensions with Havana.

Soviet-Cuban (and Khrushchev-Castro) Tensions

The reports of Soviet envoys' reports dealing with Cuba, particularly those of USSR ambassador Alekseev in Havana, add to the emerging story of differences between Khrushchev and Castro that has long been known of in general but which became far more vivid and concrete with the appearance, first, of the third volume of Khrushchev's posthumously-published tape-recorded memoirs in 1990,²³ followed by the release later that year of the Castro-Khrushchev correspondence at the height of the crisis,²⁴ and finally, in January 1992, with the holding of an oral history conference on the crisis in Havana with Castro's enthusiastic participation.²⁵

From a peak of ostensible revolutionary solidarity in the early days of the crisis, Soviet-Cuban ties became strained as the crisis wore on by a series of disagreements—from Moscow's concern that Cuban zeal (reflected in the shooting down of an American U-2 plane on October 27) might provoke a U.S. invasion, to Khrushchev's belief (hotly disputed by Castro) that the Cuban leader had advocated a recourse to nuclear war (if the U.S. attacked Cuba) in his cable to Khrushchev on October 26, to Khrushchev's failure to consult with Castro before agreeing to Kennedy's terms for withdrawing the missiles on October 28, to a dispute over whether to permit UN inspection of Soviet ships in Cuban ports to verify the withdrawal of missiles, to a Cuban anger over Moscow's succumbing to Washington's demand to pull out Soviet IL-28 bombers as well as the nuclear missiles.

The alarming reports received by Moscow from its envoy in Havana helped lead Khrushchev to dispatch his trusted trouble-shooter,

MORE ON BOBBY AND THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

by Jim Hershberg

In accounts of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Robert F. Kennedy—the Attorney General and brother to President John F. Kennedy—has occupied a singular place, and not merely because his posthumously-published memoir, *Thirteen Days*, became a best-selling (and sometimes controversial) account of the crisis as well as a unique portrait of what it felt like to be a high-level decision-maker looking down the gun barrel of nuclear war.¹ RFK also garners special attention for his key role at two particular points in the crisis. One came early on, in the secret debates in the White House "Excomm" (Executive Committee) after the missiles were discovered in mid-October, when he ardently opposed a surprise U.S. air strike against the sites under construction in Cuba, likening such an action to Pearl Harbor ("I now know how Tojo felt," he noted at one point in the debate) and condemning it as morally unworthy; the argument helped turn the tide in the debate away from an air strike and toward a blockade or "quarantine," which Kennedy announced to the world on October 22. The second key moment came at the climax of the crisis, on Saturday evening, October 27, with Moscow and Washington seemingly on a collision course, when Robert Kennedy met secretly with Dobrynin at the Justice Department and the two men hammered out the terms of a secret arrangement whereby the Attorney General conveyed his brother's oral pledge that Washington would quickly pull its Jupiter missiles out of Turkey, as Khrushchev had publicly proposed earlier that day, so long as the Soviets removed their own missiles from Cuba and kept quiet about the Turkish aspect of the deal.²

Recently-released Russian archival documents, published in English translation in the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* (the present issue and no. 5, Spring 1995), shed additional light on Robert F. Kennedy's actions during the crisis, particularly his back-channel contacts with Soviet ambassador Dobrynin. This article seeks to note briefly some of these new findings, and also appends Robert F. Kennedy's own declassified memorandum of the controversial 27 October 1962 encounter with Dobrynin to supplement the Dobrynin's version (and other accounts) published in the *Bulletin* in early 1995.³ (The *Bulletin* thanks Prof. Peter Roman of Duquesne University for providing this document.)

First worth noting from Dobrynin's cables is his initial impression of Robert Kennedy as a hardliner and "hot-head," driven by political ambition, liable to support impulsive actions, and hardly a character one would predict that Dobrynin would end up collaborating with to resolve the crisis. This is not altogether surprising given the contentiousness of the issues, the combativeness of Robert Kennedy's personality, and the fact that President Kennedy had used his brother to transmit personally to Dobrynin on 4 September 1962 a strong message of concern regarding Soviet military aid to Cuba. Moreover, in Dobrynin's cabled report of his first meeting with Robert Kennedy during the crisis, late on the evening of October 23 (the night after the president's speech), RFK's deep anger and sense of personal betrayal toward Khrushchev

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Anastas Mikoyan, to smooth the Cubans' ruffled feathers, and the Soviet records of Mikoyan's conversations with Cuban leaders in early November 1962, published in *Bulletin 5*, dramatically reveal the emotional rift which had emerged between the two communist allies.²⁶ (Cuban authorities subsequently released their own minutes of two of those conversations, which are printed below; see box.)

The Alekseev cables printed in the current *Bulletin*, when read in conjunction with the other sources noted above (particularly the Castro-Khrushchev correspondence) helps show how these tensions developed. On October 23 and 25, as the crisis mounted, Alekseev sent highly positive reports on the Cuban people's "calm," confidence, and preparedness for military confrontation, even noting that the imminent danger had prompted a "special business-like efficiency and energy" that had even dispelled the "ostentation and verbosity that are characteristic of Cubans." In the second of the aforementioned cables, however, a glimmer of disagreement appears when Alekseev states that Castro "approves of our policy of not giving in to provocations, and [avoiding] unnecessary conflicts," yet at the same time "expressed a belief in the necessity of shooting down one or two piratic American [reconnaissance] planes over Cuban territory." Another potential disagreement begins to surface when U Thant explores using Cuban President Oswaldo Dorticos' proposal to the UN General Assembly of October 8—in which the Cuban said a guaranteed U.S. pledge of non-aggression against Cuba would remove the need for Cuban military preparations; while Moscow echoed this formulation in Khrushchev's secret October 26 letter to Kennedy, the Cubans were now deeply distrustful that such a promise could be trusted.

By October 27, a new fissure had opened up over Khrushchev's public letter that day to Kennedy, which for the first time raised the possibility of a trade of Soviet missiles in Cuba for U.S. Jupiter missiles in Turkey—an idea raised without regard to the sensibilities of the Cubans, who thought they had an iron-clad agreement with Moscow to deploy the missiles that could not be "swapped" for American missiles elsewhere in the world. When Gromyko dispatched a message to Castro through the Soviet Embassy in Havana informing him that it would be "advisable" for him to quickly endorse Khrushchev's letter to Kennedy, Castro responded via Alekseev complimenting Khrushchev's "great diplomatic skill" but also noting that it had provoked "symptoms of a certain confusion in various sectors of the Cuban population and among some members of the military," who were asking "whether it constitutes a rejection by the USSR of its former obligations." Castro also defended the downing of the American U-2 that day, brushing aside Alekseev's admonition not to "aggravate the situation and initiate provocations."

On the following day, October 28, Cuban anger deepened as Moscow and Washington settled the crisis over their heads, and to add insult to injury Moscow began pressuring Castro to agree to allow United Nations inspectors to examine the Soviet missile sites on the island to verify that work had stopped. "Confusion and bewilderment are reigning inside the Cuban leadership" as a result of Khrushchev's agreement to dismantle the missiles, Dorticos told Alekseev, adding that "under the present conditions of great patriotic enthusiasm of our people this report would be perceived by the infinitely electrified masses as a cold shower." Alekseev's excuses that technical problems had delayed the sending to Havana of an advance copy of Khrushchev's letter to Kennedy—which had been read out over Moscow Radio before Castro (let alone Kennedy) received a copy—made hardly a dent in the "picture of incomprehension" painted by another senior official, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez.

In subsequent days, as Castro and Khrushchev jostled in their correspondence and Cuban forces continued to fire on American U-2 planes, the Soviets implored the Cubans to display "self-restraint" and not take actions that could "give the aggressors a pretext to blame our side," and vainly reiterated that "we consider it necessary" to satisfy U Thant's desire to have the UN conduct on-site inspections on Cuban territory—a demand Castro and the Cuban leadership angrily rejected in an open show of defiance.

But it was Khrushchev's letter of October 30 that sent Castro's anger to an even higher pitch; in it the Soviet leader acknowledged that "some Cubans" wished that he had not declared his willingness to withdraw the nuclear missiles, but that the alternative would have been to "be carried away by certain passionate sectors of the population and [to have] refused to come to a reasonable settlement with the U.S. government," leading to a war in which millions would have died; Khrushchev also said he had viewed Castro's cable of October 26 "with extreme alarm," considering "incorrect" its proposal that the Soviet Union "be the first to launch a nuclear strike against the territory of the enemy [in response to a non-nuclear U.S. invasion of Cuba] ... Rather than a simple strike, it would have been the start of thermonuclear war."²⁷

Reading the letter "attentively," as described in Alekseev's report of the meeting (printed below), Castro had only two, terse responses: there were not merely "some" Cuban comrades who failed to understand Khrushchev's position, "but the whole Cuban people"—and as for the second item, Castro denied proposing that Khrushchev be "the first in delivering a blow against the adversary territory," only in the event that Cuba had been attacked and Cubans and Soviets were dying together; perhaps Khrushchev misunderstood or the translation was in error. Alekseev, unfazed, not only defended the translation but made it clear that Khrushchev had understood him all too well—"even in this case [of aggression]," the Soviet envoy admonished Castro, "it is hardly possible merely to approach mechanically such an important issue and to use nuclear arms without looking for other means." The message: just as West Europeans had cause to wonder whether Americans would "trade New York for Hamburg," linking local to strategic deterrence, the Cubans were sadly mistaken if they believed Moscow was ready to undertake global thermonuclear war—with the suicidal consequences that entailed—in defense of the Cuban Revolution.

¹ Books that have appeared on the crisis in English in recent years incorporating newly-available evidence include: James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Noonday, 1990); James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, *Cuba On the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon, 1993); James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992); Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, eds., *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National*

Security Archive Documents Reader (New York: New Press, 1992); Robert Smith Thompson, *The Missiles of October: The Declassified Story of John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992); Mary S. McAuliffe, ed., *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Washington, DC: CIA History Staff, October 1992); Gen. Anatoli I. Gribkov and Gen. William Y. Smith, *Operation ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago: Edition Q, 1994); and Dino A. Brugioni, *Eyeball to Eyeball: The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis*, updated ed. (New York: Random House, 1990, 1991, [1992?]). The volume of *Foreign Relations of the United States* covering the crisis, previously scheduled for publication in 1993, had still not appeared as of the end of 1996, but should include additional declassified U.S. documentation when it appears; mention should be made, however, of a *FRUS* volume that appeared in 1996 compiling Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence and communications during the Kennedy Administration: U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, Vol. VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1996). The National Security Archive, a non-governmental research institute and declassified documents repository located at the Gelman Library at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., published a microfiche collection of declassified documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1992 and maintains files of additional documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act that are available for scholarly research.

² In *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 1 (Spring 1992), see Raymond L. Garthoff, "The Havana Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 2-4; in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 3 (Fall 1993), see Mark Kramer, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons, Soviet Command Authority, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 40, 42-46; and James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, "KRAMER VS. KRAMER: Or, How Can You Have Revisionism in the Absence of Orthodoxy?" pp. 41, 47-50; in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), see Philip Brenner and James G. Blight, "Cuba, 1962: The Crisis and Cuban-Soviet Relations: Fidel Castro's Secret 1968 Speech," pp. 1, 81-85; Alexander Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, "Using KGB Documents: The Scali-Feklisov Channel in the Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 58, 60-62; Raymond L. Garthoff, intro., "Russian Foreign Ministry Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 58, 63-77; Vladislav M. Zubok, "'Dismayed by the Actions of the Soviet Union': Mikoyan's talks with Fidel Castro and the Cuban leadership, November 1962," pp. 59, 89-92, 93-109, 159; Mark Kramer, "The 'Lessons' of the Cuban Missile Crisis for Warsaw Pact Nuclear Operations," pp. 59, 110, 112-115, 160 (see corrected version in this issue); Jim Hershberg, "Anatomy of a Controversy: Anatoly F. Dobrynin's Meeting With Robert F. Kennedy, Saturday, 27 October 1962," pp. 75, 77-80; and Georgy Shakhnazarov, "Fidel Castro, Glasnost, and the Caribbean Crisis," pp. 83, 87-89.

³ Although it appears that verbatim records of meetings of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU) Politburo may not exist for this period, the declassification of notes of Kremlin discussions concerning the 1956 Polish and Hungarian Crises, taken by V.M. Malin, prompts hope that similar materials may soon become available in Moscow. A full report on the Malin notes on the 1956 crises, translated, introduced, and annotated by Mark Kramer, appears elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

⁴ For Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence, see *FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges*, cited above, which includes many exchanges during the missile crisis declassified by the U.S. government in 1991 in response to a Freedom of Information Act filed by the National Security Archive; these were first published in a special Spring 1992 issue of *Problems of Communism*. Correspondence between Castro and Khrushchev during the crisis was published in November 1990 in the Cuban Communist Party newspaper *Granma*; an English translation can be found in an appendix of Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba On the Brink*, 474-491.

⁵ On the Soviet military during the crisis, see Gribkov and Smith, *Operation ANADYR*, cited above; Soviet military evidence on the crisis was also presented in a conference in Moscow in September 1994 organized by the then-head of the Russian Archival Service, R. Pikhov.

⁶ See Alekseev to Foreign Ministry, 7 September 1962, in *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 63.

⁷ Telegram from Gromyko to Foreign Ministry, 19 October 1962, *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 66-67.

⁸ James G. Hershberg, "Before 'The Missiles of October': Did Kennedy Plan a Military Strike Against Cuba?" in Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited*, 237-280, a slightly revised version of an article that appeared in *Diplomatic History* 14 (Spring 1990), 163-198.

⁹ "Notes Taken from Transcripts of Meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, October-November 1962, dealing with the Cuban Missile Crisis (handwritten notes were made in 1976 and typed in 1993)," released under the Freedom of Information Act, copy made available by National Security Archive.

¹⁰ Historical Division, Joint Secretariat, Joint Chiefs of Staff, April 1981, "Joint Chiefs of Staff Special Historical Study: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and US Military Responses to the Threat of Castro's Cuba," pp. 11-12; the report, formerly Top Secret, was declassified on 7 May 1996 and released under the Freedom of Information Act; a copy was made available courtesy of the National Security Archive.

¹¹ In correspondence between the JCS and the National Archives in 1993, subsequently obtained and made available to CWIHP by William Burr of the National Security Archive, the JCS acknowledged that in August 1974, the Secretary, JCS had decided to destroy systematically all transcripts of JCS meetings between 1947 and 1974, as well as subsequent meetings after a six-month waiting period. (August 1974 was, coincidentally or not, the month that Richard M. Nixon resigned the presidency in part, many said, due to his failure to destroy the Watergate tapes.) This reason given for this action was that the transcripts "did not constitute official minutes of the meetings but were merely working papers reflecting the reporter's version of events." In 1978, the JCS communication to the National Archives noted, "The practice of recording the meetings terminated in August of 1978 and all materials were subsequently destroyed."

The only exception to this destruction of records, it was reported, was that the JCS History Office took "notes (approximately 30 typed pages) from selected transcripts relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis and various other crises through the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war"—hence the notation on the top of the Cuban Missile Crisis notes in which the McNamara quotation appears that they were "handwritten notes were made in 1976 and typed in 1993."

The letter from the JCS to the National Archives reads as follows:

The Joint Staff
Washington, D.C. 20318-0400

January 25, 1993
 Mr. James J. Hastings
 Director
 Records Appraisal and Disposition Division
 National Archives
 Washington, DC 20408

Dear Mr. Hastings:

This responds to your letter seeking information concerning the destruction of recorded minutes of the meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff referred to in an article by the Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff History Office which you forwarded me as an enclosure.

The minutes of the meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were recorded in various forms from 1947 to 1978. In August of 1974 the Secretary, Joint Chiefs of Staff determined that the transcripts generated did not constitute official minutes of the meetings but were merely working papers reflecting the reporter's version of events. Accordingly, the Secretary ordered the destruction of virtually all transcripts over six months old after screening for historical significance. He also directed that all future minutes/transcripts, with minor exceptions, would be destroyed at the six month point. The practice of recording the meetings terminated in August of 1978 and all materials were subsequently destroyed. However, it should be noted all of these actions were taken prior to approval of the first Joint Chiefs of Staff records disposition schedule by the Archivists of the United States on 11 December 1980.

The Joint Staff History Office did take notes (approximately 30 typed pages) from selected transcripts relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis and various other crises through the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war. The Joint Staff concurs with your determination that these notes are records under File Number 00-1 of JAI 5760.2F and will accession them into the National Archives at the appropriate time.

Any further questions you have regarding this matter may be directed to Mr. Sterling Smith on (703) 697-6906.

Sincerely,

/s/ EDMUND F. McBRIDE
 Chief, Documents Division

Joint Secretariat

12 Telegram from Dobrynin to Soviet Foreign Ministry, 23 October 1962, *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 70-71.

13 Interview with Georgy Kornienko, cited in Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 260, 266.

14 *Khrushchev Remembers*, intro., commentary, and notes by Edward Crankshaw, trans. and ed. by Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970; citation from New York: Bantam Books paperback ed., 1971), 555.

15 Mikoyan-Castro conversation, 4 November 1962, *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 96; see also the Cuban version printed in this *Bulletin*.

16 See excerpts from Gromyko-Kennedy conversation printed below; the document released by the Russian Foreign Ministry archives omits the section of the record dealing specifically with the Berlin question, but the American record appears in U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. XV: Berlin Crisis 1962-1963* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1994), 370-376. On the Berlin-Cuba connection, see Thomas A. Schwartz, "The Berlin Crisis and the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 21:1 (Winter 1997), 143-144.

17 Khrushchev to Kennedy, 28 September 1962, *FRUS, 1961-1963, vol. VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges*, 152-161.

18 Dobrynin to Foreign Ministry, 19 October 1962, published in this issue.

19 Telegram from Gromyko to CC CPSU, 19 October 1962, *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 66-67.

20 Mikoyan-Castro conversation, 4 November 1962, *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 97.

21 For Dobrynin's own recollections of the crisis, see Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents (1962-1986)* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 71-95.

22 Much of this documentation was declassified as a result of Freedom of Information Act requests filed by the National Security Archive and is available for research there. Many of the most important documents on the negotiations should appear in forthcoming *FRUS* volumes dealing with the Cuban Missile Crisis and U.S.-Soviet relations during the Kennedy Administration

23 *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes*, trans. and ed. by Jerrold L. Schecter with Vyacheslav V. Luchkov (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1990), esp. 161-183.

24 See fn. 4, above.

25 See Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba On the Brink*, *passim*.

26 See Zubok, "'Dismayed by the Actions of the Soviet Union': Mikoyan's talks with Fidel Castro and the Cuban leadership, November 1962," *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 59, 89-92, 93-109, 159, for records of Mikoyan-Cuban talks on 3-5 November 1962, and Gribkov and Smith, Operation ANADYR, 189-190, 191-199, for Mikoyan's conversation with Castro on 12 November 1962.

27 Khrushchev to Castro, 30 October 1962, English translation in Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba On the Brink*, 485-488.

**RUSSIAN DOCUMENTS
ON THE
CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS**

I. BEFORE THE CRISIS:

14 SEPTEMBER-21 OCTOBER 1962

**M. Zakharov and S. P. Ivanov to
N.S. Khrushchev, 14 September 1962**

Personal memorandum to N. S. Khrushchev

The USA is conducting intensive air and naval patrols around Cuba, giving special attention to the reconnaissance of Soviet vessels.

The head of the Cuban counterrevolutionaries, Juan Manuel Salvat, announced in a press conference on September 7 that any vessel sailing under a Communist flag in Cuban territorial waters, regardless of its nationality, will be considered a military target and subject to attack without warning.

At present, Soviet vessels approaching the island of Cuba are systematically subjected to air-patrols by USA planes. In September of this year as many as 50 cases were recorded of Soviet vessels being air-patrolled. The patrols were carried out at critically dangerous altitudes (50-100 meters).

With the aim of ensuring the safety of our vessels from acts of piracy on the part of Americans and Cuban counterrevolutionaries, we ask to authorize the following:

1. On every transport vessel bound for Cuba with personnel and arms for one unit (of a formation), to place for self-defense, above and beyond each ship's own armaments, two 23 mm. anti-aircraft combination gun-mounts with a reserve supply of 2 complements (2,400 missiles) for each gun-mount. These gun-mounts are found on the arms of the airborne-landing forces, and they are a powerful strategic tool both for air targets at distances of up to 2,500 meters at heights of up to 1,500 meters, as well as for light-armoured naval targets at distances of up to 2,000 meters. On practice shootings the gun-mount has penetrated armour-plating 25 mm. thick. The gun-mount requires a three-man crew. All in all it is necessary to arm 34 vessels.

2. To confirm instructions given to the captain of the vessel and the head of the military echelon regarding the defense of transport vessels crossing the sea against acts of piracy committed by airplanes, ships,

and submarines belonging to the USA and to the Cuban counterrevolutionaries.

M. Zakharov
S. P. Ivanov

14 September 1962

[Source: Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense (TsAMO), Moscow; copy provided to CWIHP by R. Pikhov at September 1994 Moscow Conference, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Hendriksen, Harvard University.]

**Cable from USSR Ambassador to the
USA A.F. Dobrynin to Soviet Foreign
Ministry, 15 October 1962**

According to separate confidential reports, the piratic raids by the so-called "Alpha 66" group on the Cuban coast and on several vessels near Cuba are being carried out not from a base on the American mainland, but rather directly from the sea, from American landing ships carrying the corresponding cutters. The crews of these cutters are dispatched directly onto these ships by helicopters in the possession of the Cuban members of the group "Alpha 66," who are based in Miami, Puerto Rico, and the Yucatan.

The American ships carrying these cutters maintain a constant readiness for military action, and meticulously care for the technical condition of the cutters, performing repairs in the case of damage. During this time, the American instructors on these ships direct the training, both tactical and otherwise, of the Cuban crews who carry out operations directly on the cutters.

This sort of tactic allows the American forces to assert that the cutters belonging to the "Alpha 66" group are not acting from a base within USA territory, but from some "unknown bases." As far as the American vessels carrying the cutters are concerned, the Central Intelligence Agency of the USA, which to judge from all available information is directing all these operations, is counting on the fact that detecting and identifying this sort of vessel will not be easy, since there is a lively traffic of American vessels between Florida and the American base Guantanamo in Cuba.

15.X.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

**Cable from USSR Ambassador to the
USA A.F. Dobrynin to Soviet Foreign
Ministry, 19 October 1962**

At a closed conference taking place on 16 October for the editors and leading correspondents of the American press, radio, and television, to provide information on the evaluation of the current international situation and the USA's official position in it, President Kennedy spoke. This speech was given exclusively for the personal edification of those present, and it was denied all publication rights.

The content of the President's speech came down to the following.

The government's duty is to seek out global solutions to the global problems facing the USA. There was once a time when war could be seen as an acceptable extension of politics, but nuclear war in its extreme form cannot be seen as such, since it would lead to huge destruction and the loss of millions of lives in the countries taking part in it. The USA must learn to accept and live in the current conditions of direct confrontation between the USA and the USSR, and between Communism's strivings for expansion and the USA's strivings to support the sort of alignment of forces that allows the free nations to thrive, and that allows the USA in particular to safeguard its own interests. In similar situations earlier, the result of such confrontation has always been war—but now the question is how we can get through this period without war and, especially importantly, without nuclear war.

Some sort of crisis relating to Berlin is clearly brewing now, and we will have to see whether we can surmount it without recourse to military action. There are no signs that the Russians are preparing to soften their demands with regard to Berlin; they want us either to get out of there, or to share with them our rights in West Berlin. They would like to start a chain reaction that would ultimately lead to the elimination of American positions in West Berlin and many other

places. The USA is determined not to let this happen. It cannot be allowed to occur. The West's presence in Berlin and its access to the city represent, as before, vitally important interests, and no concessions with regard to them can or will be made to Soviet pressure, whatever form that pressure may take. The problem now consists of the fact that we both have locked horns [in confrontation—ed.].

Nuclear war may be an irrational phenomenon, but there is more to it than this, since recognizing it as irrational does not necessarily signify being saved from it. If both sides come to the negotiating table with an absolute certainty that the other side will in no circumstances have recourse to nuclear war, then that would be one of the surest paths toward such a war, because one side or the other could go one step further and apply a pressure beyond what the other side is able to put up with, and for all intents and purposes we would be heading for catastrophe.

In government circles there is a feeling that we quite possibly have some difficult weeks and months ahead of us due to Berlin, and that a crisis of the first order may arise before Christmas.

With Cuba the situation is different. Berlin is a vitally important issue for both sides, and the fundamental positions of both sides with regard to it remain inflexible. Latin American is another vitally important region. Berlin and Latin America are two dangerous regions. No [U.S.] military actions concerning Cuba could be or should be undertaken until there are signs of overt Cuban aggression against the countries of the Western hemisphere. Cuba should be and is now under close observation, and the USA has been kept informed of what is happening there. The USA's policy consists, as before, in ensuring that the maintenance of Cuba be as expensive as possible both for the USSR and for Castro's regime. It appears unlikely that the USSR could afford to invest funds in Cuba that would be sufficient to meet Cuba's actual and long-term needs. Only the USA alone had a billion-dollar trade with Cuba before the Castro revolution.

According to the American government's calculations, there are currently in Cuba around five thousand Russian military specialists. One must suppose that the Russians are sufficiently experienced people to

understand that the military equipment which they are supplying to Cuba, or can supply in the future, would make little difference if the USA were to consider itself forced to take military action against it. They have enough experience as well in East Germany and the Eastern European countries to recognize the limits of their capacities to revitalize and strengthen the Cuban economy, especially bearing in mind the distances involved. Meanwhile the Latin American countries have taken measures towards isolating Cuba and condemning to failure the Communists' attempts to spread their system throughout the other countries of the Western hemisphere.

There can be no talk of a recognition by the United States of some Cuban government in exile, since that step could free the current Cuban regime from the obligations fixed by treaty toward Guantanamo base and American citizens in Cuba.

There can be no deal struck with the USSR regarding its renunciation of bases in Cuba in exchange for the USA's renunciation of bases in other parts of the world (in Turkey, for example). It is necessary to treat Cuba in such a way as to advance our cause in the general battle into which the USA has been drawn. The strategy and tactics of the USA should be defined by considerations of the defense of its vital interests and its security not only in connection with the Cuban situation, but also in connection with other more serious threats.

The preceding is communicated by way of information.

19.X.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko on 18 October 1962 meeting with President Kennedy, 20 October 1962 (excerpts)

During the meeting with President Kennedy at the White House on 18 October I transmitted to him, his spouse and other members of his family regards from the head

of the Soviet government N.S. Khrushchev and from Nina Petrovna.

Kennedy expressed his gratitude to N.S. Khrushchev for the regards.

Further I said that I would like to give an account of the Soviet government policy on a number of important issues.

[section deleted—trans.]

Now I would like to expound the Soviet government's position on the Cuban issue and the USSR's assessment of the actions of the USA.

The Soviet government stands for the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems, against the interference of one state into the internal affairs of others, against the intervention of large states into the affairs of small countries. Literally, that is the core of the Soviet Union's foreign policy.

It is well known to you, Mr. President, the attitude of the Soviet government and personally of N.S. Khrushchev toward the dangerous developments connected with the USA administration position on the issue of Cuba. An unrestrained anti-Cuban campaign has been going on in the USA for a long time and apparently there is a definite USA administration policy behind it. Right now the USA are making an attempt to blockade Cuban trade with other states. There is talk about a possibility of actions of organized policy in this region under the USA aegis.

But all of this amounts to a path that can lead to grave consequences, to a misfortune for all mankind, and we are confident that such an outcome is not desired by any people, including the people of the USA.

The USA administration for some reason considers that the Cubans must solve their domestic affairs not at their discretion, but at the discretion of the USA. But on what grounds? Cuba belongs to the Cuban people, not to the USA or any other state. And since it is so, then why are the statements made in the USA calling for an invasion of Cuba? What do the USA need Cuba for?

Who can in earnest believe that Cuba represents a threat to the USA? If we speak about dimensions and resources of the two countries - the USA and Cuba - then it is clear that they are a giant and a baby. The flagrant groundlessness of such charges against Cuba is obvious.

Cuba does not represent, and cannot

represent, any threat to the countries of Latin America. It is strange to think as if small Cuba can encroach on the independence of either this or that country of Latin America. Cuban leaders and personally Fidel Castro have declared more than once in front of the whole world and in a most solemn manner that Cuba does not intend to impose their system, that they firmly favor the non-interference of states into the internal affairs of each other.

The people who call for an aggression against Cuba allege that, they say, it is not sufficient to have those statements of the Cuban government, though those statements are supported by deeds. But by that whatever aggressive action or adventure can be justified. Solutions of almost all the international issues are results, you know, of statements, dictums, or negotiations between states, in the course of which corresponding governments give an account of their positions on either these or those questions, as for example takes place now during the conversations that we have with the USA administration. But does the USA administration not believe the statements of the Cuban government? Really, is it not convincing when the Cuban government officially declares its aspiration to settle all disputed questions with the USA administration by means of negotiations? In this regard may be quoted the well-known statement made by Mr. [Oswaldo] Dorticos, President of the Republic of Cuba, during the current session of the UN General Assembly, a statement of which the USA President is undoubtedly aware.¹

The Cubans want to make secure their own home, their independence. They appeal for reason, for conscience. They call on the USA to renounce encroachments upon the independence of Cuba, to establish normal relations with the Cuban state.

The question is: Is it worthwhile to whip up a campaign and organize different sorts of hostile activity around Cuba and at the same time inimical actions against those states which maintain good relations with Cuba, respect its independence, and lend Cuba a helping hand at a difficult moment? Is it not a destruction of international law, of the UN principles and purposes?

Is it possible, Mr. President, for the Soviet Union, taking into account all of this, to sit cross-handed and to be a detached onlooker? You say that you like frankness.

Giving an account of the Soviet government position frankly as well, I would like to stress that nowadays is not the middle of the XIX century, is not the time of colonial partition and not the times when a victim of aggression could raise its voice only weeks and months after an assault. American statesmen frequently declare that the USA is a great power. This is correct, the USA is a great power, a rich and strong power. And what kind of power is the Soviet Union?

You know that N.S. Khrushchev was positively impressed by your realistic statement during the Vienna meeting about the equality of forces of the two powers—the USSR and USA. But insofar as it is so, inasmuch as the USSR is also a great and strong power it cannot be a mere spectator while there is appearing a threat of unleashing a large war either in connection with the Cuban issue or [with a] situation in whatever other region of the world.

You are very well aware of the Soviet government attitude toward such an action of the USA, as the decision about the draft of 150 thousand reservists.² The Soviet government is convinced that if both of our countries favor a lessening of international tension and a solution of unsettled international problems, then such steps should be avoided because they are intended for sharpening the international situation.

If it came to the worst, if a war began, certainly, a mobilization of an additional 150 thousand reservists to the USA armed forces would not have significance. And undoubtedly you are very well aware of this. For the present is not the year 1812 when Napoleon was setting all his hopes upon the number of soldiers, of sabres and cannons. Neither is it 1941, when Hitler was relying upon his mass armies, automatic rifles, and tanks. Today life and military equipment have made a large step forward. Nowadays the situation is quite different and it would be better not to rely on armaments while solving disputed problems.

So far as the aid of the Soviet Union to Cuba is concerned, the Soviet government has declared and I have been instructed to reaffirm it once more, our aid pursues exclusively the object of rendering Cuba assistance to its defensive capacity and development of its peaceful economy. Neither industry nor agriculture in Cuba, neither land-improvement works nor training of the Cuban personnel carried out by the Soviet

specialists to teach them to use some defensive types of armaments, can represent a threat to anybody. Had it been otherwise, the Soviet government would never be involved in such aid. And such an approach applies to any country.

The example of Laos convincingly illustrates this. If the Soviet Union were conducting another policy, not the present one, then the situation in Laos would be different. For the Soviet Union and its friends seem to have more possibility to influence the situation in Laos than the USA. But we were trying to achieve an agreement because we cannot step aside from the main principles of our foreign policy designed for lessening international tension, for undoing knots of still existing contradictions between powers, for the peaceful solution of unsettled international problems. And in this regard our policy is unvarying.

Here is the position and views of the Soviet government on the Cuban issue. The Soviet government calls on you and the USA administration not to permit whatever steps are incompatible with the interests of peace and the lessening of international tension, with the UN principles which have been solemnly signed both by the USSR and the USA. We call on you to ensure that in this issue too the policies of the two largest powers pursue the object of peace and only of peace.

Having listened to our statement, Kennedy said that he was glad to hear the reference to the settlement of the Laotian problem. We believe, he continued, that the Soviet Union really acts precisely in the way which you are describing, and just as the USA the USSR is endeavoring to comply with its commitments.

Regarding the Cuban issue I [Kennedy] must say that really it became grave only this summer. Until then the Cuban question had been pushed by us to the background. True, Americans had a certain opinion about the present Cuban government and refugees from Cuba were exciting public opinion against that government. But the USA administration had no intentions to launch an aggression against Cuba. Suddenly, Mr. Khrushchev, without notifying me, began to increase at a brisk pace supplies of armaments to Cuba, although there was no threat on our side that could cause such a necessity. If Mr. Khrushchev addressed me on this issue, we could give him

corresponding assurances on that score. The build-up of the Cuban military might has badly impressed the American people and the USA congress. As President I was trying to calm public opinion and I have declared that, taking into account the kind of aid rendered by the Soviet Union to Cuba, we must keep cool and self-controlled. But I was not able to find a satisfactory explanation for those actions of the Soviet Union.

Kennedy said later, that the Soviet Union is aware of the American opinion regarding the present regime in Cuba. We consider that it would be better if there were another government. But we do not have any intentions to attack Cuba.

You are saying that we have established a blockade around Cuba, but that is not the case. We have only taken the decision that the ships, after bringing cargo to Cuba, will be barred entry to the American ports to pick up freight.

The actions of the Soviet Union create a very complicated situation and I don't know where the whole thing can bring us. The present situation is, perhaps, the most dangerous since the end of the Second World War. We, certainly, take on trust statements of the Soviet Union about the sort of armaments supplied by you to Cuba. As President I am trying to restrain those people in the USA who are favoring an invasion of Cuba. For example, last Sunday in one of my speeches I declared against one of the American senators, who had previously supported such an invasion.³

I repeat, a very dangerous situation has nevertheless arisen regarding this issue and I don't know what can be the outcome.

I answered Kennedy that once there was an attempt to organize an invasion of Cuba and it is known what was the end of the affair.⁴ From different official statements and your own statements, Mr. President, everybody know what were the circumstances and how that invasion was arranged. Everybody knows also that the USA administration needs only to move a finger and no Cuban exiles, nor those who support them in the USA and some countries of the Caribbean, would dare launch any adventure against Cuba.

At this moment Kennedy put in a remark that he had already had an exchange of opinions with N.S. Khrushchev on the issue of the invasion of Cuba in 1961 and had said that it was a mistake.

I should be glad, Kennedy stressed, to give assurances that an invasion would not be repeated neither on the part of Cuban refugees, nor on the part of the USA armed forces.

But the issue is, Kennedy said, that as a result of the USSR government's action in July of the current year the situation suddenly has changed for the worse.

Proceeding with the previous idea, I said that for the Cuban government the vital issue is the question what is to be done next. The question comes to the following: either they will stay unprepared to repulse new attempts at invasion or they must undertake steps to ensure their country from attack, take care of their defense. We have already said that the Soviet government has responded to the call of Cuba for help only because that appeal had the aim of providing Cubans with bread and removing the threat hanging over Cuba by strengthening its defensive capacity. Regarding help, rendered by the Soviet Union, in the use of some exclusively defensive armaments, by no means can it be seen as a threat to the USA. If, I repeat, the situation were different the Soviet government never would have gone along with such an aid.

Kennedy said that, to make things completely clear on this issue, he would like to announce once more that the USA do not have any intentions to invade Cuba. Nevertheless, intensified armaments supplies to Cuba on the part of the Soviet Union, which began in July of the current year, have complicated the situation greatly and made it more dangerous.

My intention, Kennedy stressed, consists in preventing any actions that could lead to war, so long as those actions would not be occasioned by some activity of the Soviet Union or Cuba. In order to confirm that the USA administration believes the declarations of the Soviet government about the defensive character of the armaments supplied to Cuba, Kennedy read the following passage from his statement on the Cuban issue of 4 September 1962:

"Information has reached this Government in the last four days from a variety of sources which established without a doubt that the Soviets have provided the Cuban Government with a number of anti-aircraft defense missiles with a slant range of twenty-five miles similar to early models of our "Nike" [missile].

Along with these missiles, the Soviets are apparently supplying the extensive radar and other electronic equipment which is required for their operation.

We can also confirm the presence of several Soviet-made motor torpedo boats carrying ship-to-ship missiles having a range of 15 miles.

The number of Soviet military technicians now known to be in Cuba or en route—approximately 3,500—is consistent with assistance in setting up and learning to use this equipment.

As I stated last week, we shall continue to make information available as fast as it is obtained and properly verified.

There is no evidence of any organized combat force in Cuba from any Soviet bloc country; of military base provided to Russia; of a violation of the 1934 treaty relating to Guantanamo; of the presence of offensive ground-to-ground missiles; or of other significant offensive capability either in Cuban hands or under Soviet direction and guidance.

Were it to be otherwise, the gravest issues would arise."

That is our position on this issue, said Kennedy, and in this way it has been expounded by our Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, in his conversation with the Soviet Ambassador.⁵ From that position I was proceeding last Sunday when I was voicing the aforementioned statement. Thus, in all my actions I proceed with due regard for statements of the Soviet Union that the armaments supplied to Cuba have an exclusively defensive character.

I [Gromyko] said in conclusion that from the corresponding statements of the Soviet government, including the statement delivered to the President today, the USA administration has a clear view of policy of the Soviet Union on the Cuban issue and also of our assessment of the USA policy and actions regarding Cuba. I had the task of giving the President an account of all of it.

[section deleted—trans.]

Fourth. After the exchange of opinions on the issue of the [atomic] tests I broached the subject of the main principles of foreign policy of the USSR and the necessity to proceed from the thesis that difference of ideologies need not be an obstacle to peaceful cooperation between the USSR and the USA. According to the instructions,

received before departure, the question of a possible meeting of the heads of the two powers has been touched upon.

The Soviet government, as before, is building its foreign policy on the recognition of that indisputable concept that difference in ideologies, to which our states adhere, need not be a barrier to their peaceful coexistence and cooperation in the interests of strengthening the peace. You and we, as it was underlined more than once by N.S. Khrushchev, are human beings and you have your own ideology, and you are well aware of our attitude towards it. The USSR is a socialist state, and is building communism. We are guided by communist ideology. Who will gain the victory in the end—this question must be solved not by the force of armaments, but by the way of peaceful competition and we, the communists, have urged this since the days of Lenin.

We resolutely condemn the calls to solve ideological disputes by the force of armaments. A competition in economics, in satisfying the material and spiritual requirements of the people—that is the field where in a historic, peaceful “battle,” without use of armaments, must be solved the question of which ideology would prevail and which one would quit the stage of history. On behalf of the Soviet government I would like to reaffirm that [position] once more because it is one of the main principles of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

In conclusion I would like to say the following:

The Head of the Soviet government N.S. Khrushchev has entrusted me to convey to you that his opinion is that it would apparently be useful to have a meeting between the Head of the Soviet government and the USA President in order to discuss the issues that separate us and first of all the questions of the German peace treaty and West Berlin.

If N.S. Khrushchev has the opportunity, he will arrive in New York in the second half of November in order to attend the session of the UN General Assembly. Thus, we are speaking about a possibility of his arrival in the USA after the elections to Congress. Kennedy said that in the case of N.S. Khrushchev coming to the USA he would be glad to meet him once more. Nevertheless, he said, it would be erroneous to speak about the only point of the agenda of this meeting - to discuss “the Berlin problem and

the signing of the German peace treaty,” because there are others who are also interested in discussing those questions besides our two countries. If Mr. Khrushchev comes to the General Assembly I would be glad to discuss with him questions that we are interested in without any formal agenda and without picking out any concrete issue that must be discussed.

I thanked the President for the conversation during which we have discussed questions that represent interests for both countries, concerning important aspects of the foreign policies of the USSR and the USA. I also underlined the view of the Soviet government that it would be a great historic achievement if the USSR and the USA come to terms over those questions that divide us.

Kennedy responded that he agrees with that remark. As I have already told Mr. Khrushchev, the USA is a large and rich country. The Soviet Union is also a large and rich country. Each of our countries has a lot of things to do inside our countries. As to the outcome of the competition between the, which I hope will be a peaceful one, history will decide it. On Mr. Khrushchev, as the head of the Soviet government, and on me, as the USA President, rests enormous responsibility and we have no right to allow any actions that can lead to a collision.

During the last 9 months while I am holding the post of President we were seeking by all means to settle relations between our two countries. We have reached some success on the Laotian issue. We were aspiring to reach agreements both on Berlin and German problems. Unfortunately we didn't manage to do it.

As to Cuba I cannot understand what has happened in July of this year, particularly taking into account statements made by Mr. Khrushchev that he understands the basis of the USA approach. In spite of success achieved on the Laotian question, the situation around the Cuban issue is becoming more and more complicated.

In conclusion Kennedy transmitted his regards to N.S. Khrushchev and expressed gratitude for receiving the USA Ambassador in Moscow Mr. [Foy] Kohler and several American representatives who had visited the Soviet Union.

For my part I assured the President once more that the policy of the Soviet Union always has been and remains directed at strengthening peace and the elimination

of differences in the relations among all countries, above all in relations between the USSR and the USA, with whom the Soviet Union wants to live in peace and friendship.

[This policy] also applies to the Cuban issue, which was not invented by the Soviet Union, it applies to the question of signing the German peace treaty and normalization on its basis of the situation in West Berlin and it applies to all the other issues that separate our two countries. Our policy is the policy of peace, friendship, the policy of removing differences by peaceful means.

In conclusion I promised to convey the regards from the President to the Head of the Soviet government N.S. Khrushchev and expressed confidence that he would accept it with pleasure.

The conversation lasted 2 hours and 20 minutes. There were present: on the American side - Rusk, Thompson, Hillenbrandt and Akalovsky, on the Soviet side - Semenov, Dobrynin, and Sukhodrev.

A. GROMYKO

20/10/1962

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

II. THE CRISIS: 22-28 OCTOBER 1962

Telegram from Soviet representative to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 22 October 1962

22 October 1962

On the evening of 22 October, during Kennedy's speech, the United States sent me, as chair of the Security Council, a letter demanding an urgent convocation of the Security Council for a discussion of the “serious threat to the security of the Western hemisphere, and to peace throughout the whole world, posed by continuing and growing foreign intervention in the Caribbean basin.” In oral communication, the Americans called for a convocation of the Security Council on 23 October at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.

[U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Adlai] Stevenson's letter reiterated the points made by Kennedy in his radio and television

speech. Appended to the letter was the draft of a resolution which in its main strategic part runs as follows:

“The Security Council...

1. Demands, as a temporary measure, in accordance with Article 40 of the Charter, the immediate dismantling and removal from Cuba of all ballistic missiles and other armaments used for offensive purposes.

2. Authorizes and requests the acting secretary general to dispatch to Cuba a corps of UN observers to ensure fulfillment of this resolution and to deliver a report.

3. Demands the cessation of quarantine measures directed against military deliveries to Cuba after the UN has been assured of the fulfillment of Point 1.

4. Strongly recommends that the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics immediately discuss the issue of measures to be taken to eliminate the currently existing threat to the security of the Western hemisphere and to peace throughout the world, and to deliver a report on this to the Security Council.”

We will forward the text of Stevenson’s letter and the draft of the resolution to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by teletype.

The United States’ formulation of the imaginary threat posed by Cuba and the USSR is clearly aimed at concealing and justifying to public opinion the USA’s unilaterally imposed military blockade of Cuba, which is an overtly aggressive act. In light of this, the demand for convening the Security Council is put forth after the USA has in fact established a blockade and undertaken a series of other aggressive actions against revolutionary Cuba. Thus the Americans have presented the Security Council, as they have done in the past, with a *fait accompli*.

Before consulting with the other members of the Security Council on the time for convening the meeting of the Council, we met with the Cuban representative and had a preliminary discussion of the possibility of Cuba’s submitting to Council an examination of the issue of the USA’s aggressive actions against Cuba.

The Cuban representative is conferring with his government on this issue.

We will undertake measures toward initiating the meeting of the Council no earlier than 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on 23 October, although pressure from the Western majority of Council members for

its immediate convocation has already been exerted.

We will provide supplementary information on our position in the Security Council.

22.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 23 October 1962

23 October

Raul Castro has announced that in response to Kennedy’s threat, the Cuban government would make a decision regarding the mobilization of all subdivisions of the popular militia.

All in all, 350,000 persons will be mobilized.

The full mobilization of this group will take 72 hours.

The forces of the military units in this group (105,000 persons) have been brought to military readiness, and are occupying departure positions.

The mass labor organizations are devoting all their energy to helping the army and to replacing workers in businesses.

The mobilization will prove to be a new and heavy burden for the Cuban economy, given that the maintenance of the army will cost the country up to one million pesos per day, not counting losses from reductions in production connected with the transfer of significant numbers of workers to the army.

Tomorrow at 12:00 noon, Fidel Castro will deliver a television and radio address to the Cuban people.

Commenting on Kennedy’s speech, Raul Castro said that it was undoubtedly aimed at American voters and at the Latin American governments that still have diplomatic ties with Cuba.

Castro thinks that, under this pressure, a whole series of these governments, if not all of them, will break off relations with Cuba.

The Cuban government, said Castro, is firmly and resolutely behind the nation’s military spirit and the unity of its people in its resistance to the aggressor.

The Cuban leaders are awaiting the Soviet government’s reaction to Kennedy’s announcement, and are placing their hopes on the wisdom of our decisions.

Castro said that the USSR, which is surrounded by American bases, has strong arguments to marshal in response to Kennedy, and may enter negotiations with him. With regard to the UN observers who are now being sent to Cuba by the USA, we as a sovereign nation will never admit them onto our soil.

A complete calm and certainty dominate Cuba’s leading officials and army commanders, just as they do the popular masses.

To avoid provocations, the troops have been given orders to open fire on enemy air-planes and ships only in cases when the enemy has initiated attack first.

According to Castro, the Americans have denied Cuban workers access to Guantanamo base.

All American civilian planes have been prohibited from flying over Cuba and from approaching its shores.

A radio interception has also been received which prohibits American ships from conducting negotiations with the bases on open channels.

All new facts will be immediately communicated.

23.X.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 23 October 1962

23 October 1962

As chairman of the Security Council, I have been sent a letter by the Cuban delegate to the UN, [Mario Garcia-] Inchaustegi, in agreement with his government, demanding an urgent convocation of the Council to discuss the USA’s aggressive actions and its blockade of Cuba as acts of war.

According to Inchaustegi, the Cuban minister of foreign affairs, [Raul] Roa, may arrive in New York to take part in the Council’s examination of this issue. In con-

nection with this we are taking steps to make the convocation of the Council contingent on Roa's arrival. Nevertheless it can be expected that the Council meeting will have to be convened (given the demands of the Western majority of the Council's members) on 23 October of this year at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

During the examination of the issue in the Council, we will declare our objections to the misleading American formulation of it. Bearing in mind the Cubans' demand for entering on the agenda the issue of USA aggressions that they introduced, it can be expected that the affair will come down to entering American as well as Cuban statements on the Council's agenda.

In examining the affair in its essence, guided by the Soviet government's most recent announcements on the Cuban question, we will point out that the USA's aggressions against Cuba cannot be evaluated as anything other than a provocation pushing the world to the verge of nuclear war. We will demand a condemnation of the USA aggressions, the immediate cessation of the blockade they have declared and all infractions of maritime freedom; and an immediate end to all forms of intervention in the domestic affairs of the Republic of Cuba.

We will also propose that the USA government immediately enter into direct negotiations with the Cuban government on the settling of its conflicts with Cuba through peaceful means, as suggested by Dorticos in his speech in the UN General Assembly. In coordination with the Cuban delegation, we will introduce a draft resolution that includes the above-mentioned points.

We will of course vote against the American draft resolution.

We will take action as indicated above, unless we receive other instructions before the meeting of the Council begins.

It is not impossible that, when both draft resolutions are vetoed, the USA will then propose that the Council vote on transferring the issue to the General Assembly.

23.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF)*, Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWHIP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 23 October 1962

23 October 1962

On 23 October at 4:00 p.m., under the chairmanship of the USSR delegate, a meeting of the Security Council took place, on the agenda of which was our issue of the violation of the UN Charter and the threat to peace on the part of the USA.

Attention paid to this meeting was enormous: the assembly hall was filled to capacity, and virtually all the representatives of the Anglo-American bloc of the UN were present.

On approving the agenda we made a declaration in which made note of the false nature of the USA's address to the Security Council, which was a clumsy attempt to conceal the USA's aggressions. We declared that, in reality, there were some pressing issues to be brought before the Council by the USSR and Cuba: concerning violations of the UN Charter and the USA's threat to peace, and concerning USA aggressions against Cuba.

After that the agenda was approved without objections from the Council members.

The text of the Soviet government's declaration on Cuba was distributed as an official UN document, and also as a press release.

The first to speak was Stevenson (registered on the list of speakers yesterday, at the time of Kennedy's radio speech). In his long speech, which was marked by demagoguery and hypocrisy, Stevenson tried in various ways to justify the unprecedented actions of the USA government, the naval blockade of Cuba imposed by the United States, and the acts of piracy on the open sea. Unable to adduce any facts with which to prove the presence of a Cuban threat, Stevenson instead fell into a lengthy description of the post-war history of international relations, attempting to depict in a distorted manner the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the other socialist states. In conclusion he formally presented the American draft resolution (relayed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by teletype on 22 October). We will teletype the full text of Stevenson's speech to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The next speaker was the Cuban delegate Garcia-Inchaustegi, who delivered a clear speech exposing the provocative actions of the USA against Cuba, and declaring the the steadfast determination of the Cuban people to take up arms, if necessary, to defend their revolutionary achievements. The Cuban delegate demanded the immediate revocation of the measures announced by Kennedy. Characteristically, the Cuban's speech was greeted with friendly applause from the audience.

We will teletype the full text of the Cuban's speech as well.

After that we gave a speech with a declaration in accordance with your number 1197, and introduced a draft resolution. An account of the speech was transmitted by TASS. We are teletyping the full text to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The next meeting has been set for tomorrow, 24 October, at 9:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.

In the course of the day we have had conversations with a series of delegates from African and Asian countries, including delegates from the United Arab Republic, Ghana, Ceylon, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and others. All of these countries share a serious anxiety about the situation created by the USA's actions. All of them recognize the clear illegality of the USA's actions. They do not yet, however, show sufficient determination to take any concrete steps. Thus, for example, the delegate from the United Arab Republic initially made much of the unofficial Council draft resolution calling for the respective parties to remove the blockade and to end arms stockpiling in Cuba. When we categorically rejected this proposal because it essentially replicated one of the USA's basic ideas—revoking the blockade after the cessation of arms deliveries to the Cubans—the neutral parties prepared another draft resolution.

This draft makes the following stipulations:

1. To call upon all interested parties to abstain from any actions which could directly or indirectly aggravate the situation, and to work towards returning the Caribbean area to the condition it was in before 22 October;

2. To request that the acting Secretary General immediately discuss with the interested parties direct measures to be taken for removing the current threat to the general

peace.

3. To call upon the interested parties to carry out this resolution immediately, and to cooperate with the acting Secretary General in the fulfillment of this aim.

4. To ask the acting Secretary General to report to the Security Council on the fulfillment of the second point.

We remarked that even this draft is not fully satisfactory, in part because it does not even indicate (in clear and unambiguous terms) that the USA's declared blockade of Cuba must be immediately ended.

This evening, after the Security Council meeting, the delegates from neutral Asian and African countries will hold a meeting to discuss the general policy that it would be most advisable for them to follow with regard to this issue. In the course of tomorrow's meeting we will decisively defend the position laid out in our draft resolution, and will exert pressure on the neutrals to do the same.

23.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 25 October 1962, on UN Security Council Meeting of 24 October 1962

25 October 1962

On 24 October speeches were delivered in the Security Council by the delegates from Venezuela, England, Rumania, Ireland, France, Chile, the United Arab Republic, Ghana, and also by U Thant.

Comrade [Deputy Foreign Minister Mircea] Malitza, the delegate from Rumania, fully supported the Soviet Union's formulation of the issue of the USA violation of the UN Charter and the USA threat to peace, and supports with equal conviction the Security Council draft resolution introduced by the Soviet Union.

The speech of the English delegate, [Sir Patrick] Dean, supported the false accusa-

tions of the Soviet Union's alleged installation in Cuba of offensive nuclear missile weaponry, the accusations by means of which the USA is trying to justify its aggressions against Cuba (we are teletyping the full text of the speech). Dean asserted that the only way to restore peace and trust is to remove from Cuban territory the "offensive missiles." It is revealing that Dean tried as hard as he could to get around the question of the naval blockade imposed by the USA on Cuba.

Declaring England's support for the American draft resolution, Dean at the same time expressed his thoughts on the necessity of negotiations between the interested parties.

The French delegate [Roger] Seydoux also supported the American draft resolution, representing it as allegedly furthering the interests of a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Like Dean, he reiterated the false assertions by the USA of the allegedly offensive nature of the armaments supplied by the Soviet Union to Cuba (we are teletyping the full text).

In the speeches by the delegates from Venezuela and Chile, support was given to the justification of the resolution, approved under pressure from the USA, of the Organization of American States, which is opposed to Cuba. They asserted, following USA crib-notes, that the Soviet arms in Cuba upset the balance of power in the Western hemisphere, and constitute a threat to the security of the nations of this area. The delegates from Venezuela and Chile declared their support for the American draft resolution.

The delegate from Ireland, [Minister for External Affairs Frank] Aiken, recognizing the right of the Cuban nation to decide its own fate and to take measures to guarantee its defense capabilities, expressed regret at the same time concerning the fact that the weaponry installed in Cuba represents huge nuclear forces that threaten the neighboring countries. Aiken appealed for a peaceful settlement by means of negotiations. He declined to express his position with regard to both the American and the Soviet draft resolutions.

The delegates from the United Arab Republic, [Mahmoud] Riad, and from Ghana, [Alex] Quaison-Sackey, pointed out that they are approaching the issue at hand in light of the principles established by the

UN Charter and by the Bandung and Belgrade conferences of nonaligned nations (we are teletyping the full texts of these speeches). Proceeding from these principles, the delegates from the United Arab Republic and Ghana defended the right of Cuba to choose its own political regime, and to carry out the necessary defense measures for safeguarding its political freedom and territorial integrity.

In the speeches of both delegates, doubt was expressed about the reliability and well-groundedness of the American assertions about the allegedly offensive character of the weaponry installed in it. Quaison-Sackey recalled with regard to this the fabrication by USA intelligence of false information that has already been used in the past for justifying aggressive actions against Cuba.

The delegates from the United Arab Republic and Ghana declared that they cannot justify the USA actions aimed at establishing a blockade of Cuba. They both emphasized that these actions by the USA constitute a violation of the principle of maritime freedom, and pose a serious threat to peace and general security. In their speeches, they noted the fact that the USA took its unilateral actions behind the back of the Security Council.

The delegates of the United Arab Republic and Ghana have appealed to the parties involved—the USA, the USSR, and Cuba—to resolve the conflict through peaceful negotiations, and have jointly introduced a draft resolution (transmitted by teletype).

The last to speak at today's meeting was the acting Secretary General of the UN, U Thant, who read the text of messages he sent today to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and to Kennedy. In these messages, U Thant proposed that for a period of two to three weeks "all arms provisioning in Cuba be voluntarily suspended, and that all quarantine activity be suspended by the opposing party." U Thant expressed his support for the proposal that the interested parties meet during this period and discuss the situation. He, U Thant, is willing to provide all necessary services for this purpose, and is at the disposal of the parties involved.

Having learned in the afternoon of the content of the message to the USSR and the USA prepared by U Thant, we told him that we considered it incorrect and wrong-headed of the acting Secretary General to

place on the same level a party on one hand that has taken provocative actions and imposed a naval blockade, and on the other hand parties that have been engaging in normal shipping activity and taking lawful measures for safeguarding their countries' defense. We emphasized that the acting Secretary General's most urgent obligation is to exert necessary pressure on the government of the USA to make them lift the illegal blockade of the Cuban coast, and end their acts of piracy that violate maritime freedom.

Nevertheless, U Thant did not change the content of his messages. The text of U Thant's message to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev has been teletyped to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Throughout the entire day, delegations from the neutral countries of Asia and Africa worked on a draft resolution for the Security Council. We have repeatedly met with the delegates from the United Arab Republic, Ghana, and other countries, explaining to them the necessity of including in the Council resolution a clear demand that the USA lift its naval blockade and cease its other provocative actions against Cuba.

The draft resolution introduced by the delegates from the United Arab Republic and Ghana (the text of which has been teletyped) nevertheless does not mention this directly. The draft resolution proposes that the acting General Secretary reach an agreement without delay with the immediately interested parties regarding the steps that must urgently be taken to remove the present threat to peace and to normalize the Caribbean situation, and it appeals to the interested parties to "refrain during this period from any actions which could directly or indirectly aggravate the present situation."

Although the formulation of this last point is vague, the interpretation offered in the United Arab Republic and Ghanaian delegates' speeches, and the whole tenor of their speeches, nevertheless clearly indicate that the gist of that formulation is a demand for the revocation of the measures announced by Kennedy. Despite the shortcomings of the draft, it must be noted that, if approved, it would significantly limit the USA's capacity to carry out the blockade and its other aggressions against Cuba.

We are also taking into account that, if the matter is transferred to the Assembly, it

will be difficult to count on the approval of a better resolution, since at present a majority of the Afro-Asian group supports the draft put forth by the United Arab Republic and Ghana.

Proceeding from this point, and bearing in mind the Cuban government's views, we believe that it is possible, when the United Arab Republic and Ghanaian draft resolution is voted on, that we, after issuing a statement of its shortcomings and weaknesses, might abstain from voting on it if it can be passed without our votes (that is, without the votes of the delegates from the USSR and Romania), and vote in favor of it if it fails to win the necessary number of votes without our support.

We do not rule out the possibility that Ghana and the United Arab Republic may alter their draft resolution, reducing it to an appeal to the interested parties to conduct immediate negotiations towards a settlement of the Caribbean crisis that threatens the general peace. In voting on such a resolution we will, having voiced our views on its shortcomings, take a similar position: in other words, we will abstain from voting if the resolution can be approved without our votes, and we will vote in favor of it if it would not pass without the votes of the USSR and Romania.

In the event that none of the resolutions is approved by the Council, then obviously an extraordinary special session of the Assembly will have to be convened, which we will not object to.

We will act as outlined above unless we receive other instructions.

The Council meeting will be held on 25 October at 4:00 p.m. local time, when the vote on the resolution will also take place.

It would be valuable if for this occasion we had the text of the official response to U Thant's message to N. S. Khrushchev, if such a response has been made by that time.

According to available information, the USA will respond to U Thant's message in the next few hours.

25.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.*]

Cable from Soviet Ambassador to the USA A. Dobrynin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 25 October 1962

This night (around 3 o'clock in the morning Washington time) our journalist [half-line deleted—ed.] was at the bar of the press club of Washington where usually many correspondents gather.

Barman⁶ approached him [one line deleted—ed.] and whispered that he had overheard a conversation of two prominent American journalists (Donovan⁷ and [Warren] Rogers) that the President had supposedly taken a decision to invade Cuba today or tomorrow night.

Our correspondent also had an opportunity to talk to Rogers, a correspondent of the "New York Herald Tribune," permanently accredited to the Pentagon. He confirmed that report.

[Half-line deleted—ed.] there is information that an order has been issued to bring the armed forces into maximum battle readiness including readiness to repulse nuclear attack.

We are taking steps to check this information.

25/X/62

A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.*]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 25 October 1962

25 October

The domestic situation in Cuba with regard to the USA provocations continues to remain calm and confident. The mobilization of the popular militia and the stationing of military units have been successfully completed. The industrial and commercial centers of the country are operating normally.

A special business-like efficiency and energy can be observed among the Cuban

leaders and people. At meetings and gatherings there is almost no trace of the ostentation and verbosity that are characteristic of Cubans. The awareness of an immediate threat has brought the Cuban people even closer, and has strengthened their hatred of American imperialism.

The Soviet Union's authority has climbed to unprecedented heights. The actions of the USSR government in its defense of Cuba are completely convincing the people of the failure of the American provocations. The whole country is preparing to rebuff the aggressors. Committees for the defense of the revolution are establishing, in every city neighborhood, in factories, on the national estates and institutions, first-aid brigades offering immediate help to the wounded. Volunteer brigades are on the alert for profiteers, and are prohibiting the purchase of excessive quantities of goods in stores.

Militia observation posts have been placed on all streets. There are no signs of panic, and no false alarmist rumors are being spread.

The domestic counterrevolution has fallen completely silent, and has not yet shown any signs of activity.

The nation is anxiously awaiting the first clashes between Soviet steamers and the American ships constituting the blockade.

The arrival yesterday and today of two Soviet steamers in Cuban ports without serious complications was met with great relief.

Secretary General U Thant's appeal, and Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's response to it and to Bertrand Russell, were commented upon here as events of the greatest importance.

Meanwhile the radio and newspapers attribute great significance to [Soviet Defense Minister] Marshal R.Ya. Malinsky's speech.

Moreover, Fidel Castro finds great significance in the emergence of a movement for solidarity with Cuba, especially in the countries of Latin America.

It is his view that the USA's current insane actions against Cuba provide firm ground for the further expansion of this movement, which will be able to force the Americans to rethink their plans.

He approves of our policy of not giving in to provocations, and of the possible

avoidance of unnecessary conflicts. Castro, for example, approves of the fact that several of our vessels have turned back from their courses, and thus have not given occasion for any major conflicts.

At the same time Castro, in the course of conversations with our military experts, has expressed a belief in the necessity of shooting down one or two piratic American planes over Cuban territory.

Unverifiable information has been received by us and the Czechs from unverifiable sources on the possibility of an interventionist landing or a bombing of Cuban military targets on 26-27 October. The leadership has taken this information into consideration, but is not taking it very seriously.

The situation in the Soviet colony is normal. All necessary measures have been taken for a possible exacerbation of the situation.

25.X.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Soviet Ambassador to the USA A. Dobrynin to Soviet Foreign Ministry, 25 October 1962

The situation in Washington remains tense and complicated. At the same time, today in political and diplomatic circles and in the comments of American press, radio, and television, began appearing rays of hope for a peaceful settlement of the Cuban issue and they are related to the quiet, restrained behavior of the Soviet government and its readiness for negotiations with the USA (it is necessary to mention that the Embassy is receiving quite a number of cables and letters from ordinary Americans in which they express their gratitude to the Soviet government and N.S. Khrushchev for their position in the current situation).

Nevertheless, prevailing here are the expectations for further mounting of crisis in the relations between the USA and the USSR over Cuba. In addition to our previous considerations currently we would like to say the following:

1. It is becoming daily stronger the

opinion that steps undertaken by the Kennedy administration regarding Cuba had been dictated by the desire to stop the generally unfavorable for the USA developments in the world and to try to reestablish the status-quo which had existed at the moment of the meeting between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy in Vienna last year. Risk, entailed with these steps made by Kennedy's administration, is outweighed, in his view, by those unfavorable consequences for the USA military-strategic situation, which would appear in the case of the placing in Cuba of Soviet medium and long-range missiles.

2. Regarding how far the Kennedy administration is ready to go against Cuba, the following impression has been forming.

Judging from available data, the administration sets itself, as a minimal aim, the object of not allowing the emplacement in Cuba the aforementioned missile launchers. Meanwhile, according to some sources, whose reports still need additional checking, the possibility is discussed—in case of not achieving that aim by other means—to destroy the missile launchers in Cuba under construction by a massive air-raid of American aviation. It is necessary to mention that, according to all reports, the Americans are not aware of exact numbers and kinds of our missile weapons in Cuba. This circumstance makes them rather nervous.

3. The most militant line in the USA administration still is held by [Attorney General] R. Kennedy, [Secretary of Defense Robert S.] McNamara, [National Security Adviser McGeorge] Bundy and military men, who insist on a firm approach with the purpose of destroying the missile bases in Cuba, not even stopping at invasion of the island. [Secretary of State Dean] Rusk and [Secretary of the Treasury Douglas] Dillon are now holding a somewhat restrained and more cautious position, though they also favor continued pressure upon us.

In this regard the course of the discussion inside the administration of the President's response to U Thant's appeal [of October 24; see above] seems significant. According to our information, the first group was insisting on a categorical rejection of that appeal. Such an answer had been already elaborated and it was even supposed to be transmitted to the largest information agencies. But at the last moment (around 12 o'clock midnight) the President inclined

to the current, more flexible, [version] prepared by Rusk.

The President is vacillating right now, but, judging from everything, especially the principal direction of USA policy, he is heeding the first group, particularly, his brother. A certain danger of the situation is that the President has largely engaged himself before the public opinion of America and not only America. In essence, he, as a hot-tempered gambler, has put at stake his reputation as a statesman and politician, and thus his prospects for re-election in 1964, what—being an ambitious man—he passionately seeks. This is why it is not possible to exclude completely the possibility that he can, especially taking into consideration his circle, undertake such an adventurist step as an invasion of Cuba.

4. Of course, it is difficult to draw a final conclusion whether there will be such an invasion or not. In the “war of nerves”, which now is going on, the elements of disinformation, for sure, can play a role. In this regard it is necessary to mention that the USA administration has undertaken unusual measures of control over the press. In essence an unofficial censorship has been introduced in great measure. Immediate “conducting” [guidance—ed.] of the press on the part of the Kennedy administration has been strengthened. For example, according to confidential data, today Rusk has summoned the most important American journalists and told [them] that that the tendency [that has] just appeared in some papers to show some decrease of tension (in connection with the first Soviet tanker which has passed through the blockade) did not meet the requirements of the moment and the real state of affairs. The USA administration as before is fully resolved to achieve by “whatever means” the liquidation of the missile bases in Cuba,—underscored Rusk. He also refuted several reports about USA readiness to “exchange” Soviet bases in Cuba for American bases in other countries, for example in Turkey (in this regard Rusk criticized today’s article by [Walter] Lippmann).

5. Apparently, in order to force the atmosphere, there are transmitted (on radio, TV and through the press) reports from different states about bringing to full readiness the systems of civil defense, antinuclear shelters, about food and emergency purchases by the population.

Members of the diplomatic corps who in these days have visited other parts of the country, relate that at the beginning many people in those locations, especially in the western states, perceived Kennedy’s speech of October 22 as a pre-election maneuver, but now the mood has changed. People, among them those who even not long ago were saying that it was “necessary to do something to Castro,” now are badly frightened about what may be the outcome.

Noticeably fewer people can be seen on Washington streets. Government offices are working until late at night. Preoccupation over the possibility of a major war is sensed in business circles too, and it is reflected in sharp ups and downs of actions on the New York stock exchange.

African embassies warned their students at American universities to be ready for evacuation home.

6. In general it is necessary to say that different sources in the journalist and diplomatic corps in Washington agree that currently the probability of a USA armed intervention against Cuba is great. They consider that the Kennedy administration needs only a plausible excuse to “justify” such an action. In this regard it calls attention to the strong underlining (in the evening edition papers and radio transmissions) of the assertions as if in Cuba the construction of missile sites is rapidly proceeding.

The majority of sources agree that the nearest future days will be most critical, insofar as they consider that if the USA finds themselves [itself] involved in negotiations or diplomatic discussions of the whole issue, then it will be difficult to carry out an invasion because of political considerations. In this regard, as it is recognized nearly by everybody here, a very important role is played by the self-possessed and constructive position of the Soviet government, which is restraining further broadening of the conflict, restraining the hottest heads in Washington.

25/X/62

A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.*]

Telgram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 25 October 1962

25 October 1962

We have been informed that U Thant has declared his intention to meet successively with the Americans, us, and the Cubans on 26 October. He has proposed meeting with us at 4:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time; before that he is meeting with Stevenson, and after us with Garcia-Inchaustegui. We will agree to this first meeting with U Thant.

In our talks with U Thant we will transmit Comrade N. S. Khrushchev’s response to the former’s message, and Khrushchev’s response to Kennedy and Russell as well.

We understand Comrade N.S. Khrushchev’s response to U Thant to be saying that the Soviet Union agrees with U Thant’s proposal in its goal of holding preliminary negotiations—allowing the interested parties to meet for a peaceful settlement of the crisis and for a normalization of the situation in the Caribbean area. This includes, on the part of the Soviet Union, the voluntary suspension for 2 to 3 weeks of arms stockpiling in Cuba, and, on the part of the USA, the voluntary suspension for the same period of its “quarantine” activity, including the inspection of ships bound for Cuba.

To judge from Kennedy’s response, the USA is attempting to put forth as the basis of its negotiations its demand for the removal of “offensive weaponry” from Cuba.

For this reason we should expect that the Americans will not agree to the suspension of “quarantine” activity unless this demand of theirs is met.

We of course firmly reject any attempts by the USA to impose stipulations either on us or on Cuba. In this matter we will proceed from the condition that negotiations can only be conducted on the basis of U Thant’s proposal, that is on the basis of the point about suspending arms stockpiling in Cuba, a proposal which the neutral countries support.

The possibility cannot be ruled out that U Thant, under American influence, is attempting to put forth as a primary measure the proposals made by him in his second message to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev, especially the one stipulating that Soviet ves-

sels bound for Cuba keep away from the interception area for a certain period of time, and that the USA for the duration of that same period avoid immediate encounters between their ships and Soviet vessels. In this event we will declare that U Thant's proposal, which is the basis on which all the interested parties have agreed to conduct negotiations, goes above and beyond the "primary measures" that he put forth in his second message.

Since the forthcoming meeting with U Thant is a preliminary one and raises the issue of further negotiations, including a conclusive normalization of the whole situation in the Caribbean region, we ask to be briefed on your decision as to the level, form, and direction of further negotiations.

If there are supplementary instructions for the first meeting with U Thant, we ask you to take into consideration the meeting time proposed by U Thant.

25.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 26 October 1962

26 October 1962

The Cuban delegate, Garcia-Inchaustegui, met with U Thant on 26 October, at which time U Thant entrusted him to deliver to Havana a message from him to Fidel Castro (we are sending this as a separate telegram).

In the conversation with Garcia-Inchaustegui, U Thant, who had informed him of the correspondence between U Thant and Comrade N.S. Khrushchev, and President Kennedy as well, expressed his ideas for using Dorticos's proposal of 8 October in the General Assembly as a way to achieve a lasting normalization of the Caribbean basin situation. The Cuban reminded U Thant that Dorticos in his speech had emphasized the extenuating circumstance that the USA had already declared that it did not

intend to attack Cuba, but that now it had broken their promise.

To this U Thant responded that for this reason it is necessary to specify what guarantees should be made by the USA to assure that it will not take any antagonistic actions against Cuba, and asked Garcia-Inchaustegui to explain the views of the Cuban government on this matter.

2. The head of the Brazilian delegation, [Alfonso] Arinos [de Melo Franco], has worked out a draft resolution on the denuclearization of Latin America and Africa under the observation of a monitoring committee (we will send this as a separate telegram). In a conversation with Garcia-Inchaustegui, Arinos expressed his view that approving this resolution would allow Cuba to "avoid humiliation" if it is forced to renounce the construction of missile bases.

According to Garcia-Inchaustegui, this draft resolution has received great currency among the Latin American countries, and the delegates from the Latin American contingents who met with U Thant this evening should discuss the draft with the acting Secretary General.

Garcia-Inchaustegui told the Brazilian himself that, in his personal opinion, it would be better that the issue of the elimination of all foreign military bases in Latin America be brought up, since then such a formulation would include the base at Guantanamo as well.

26.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 26 October 1962

26 October 1962

I delivered N.S. Khrushchev's response to U Thant's second message (at 13:00 local time).

U Thant expressed satisfaction with the

fact that once again his proposal had been approved. After this, U Thant told us that tonight he had received a response to his second message from Kennedy as well, and at our insistence he provided us with the text of that response (after he had submitted this disclosure to the approval of the USA legation, and after receiving our consent to his disclosing to the USA legation the content of our own response).

We are communicating the text of Kennedy's response as a separate telegram.

U Thant presented us with the possibility of his immediate publication of both his messages to N.S. Khrushchev and to Kennedy, and of both responses given to those messagees by the USSR and the USA. He led us to understand that a comparison of both responses would show the world community that the Soviet Union, unlike the USA, was continuing to aim for support of peace and the prevention of war.

We responded to the effect that we were not yet authorized to agree to the publication of N.S. Khrushchev's response, and would give him an answer later.

We believe it would be expedient to give our consent to the publication of the documents mentioned.

Today at 16:00 there will be a meeting between Stevenson and U Thant. At 18:00 Eastern Standard Time we are once again meeting with U Thant, and if we do not receive other instructions by that time, we will give our consent to the publication of N. S. Khrushchev's second response.

26.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 26 October 1962

26 October 1962

On the evening of 26 October we ([Platon] Morozov and I) met with U Thant, in the presence of [UN Under Secretary for Special Political Affairs Chakravanthi V.]

Narasiman, [UN official Omar] Loutfi, [Military Advisor to the UN Secretary-General Brig.-] General [Indar J.] Rikhye, and, on our request, Comrade [E.D.] Kiselev. After giving our consent to the publication of N.S. Khrushchev's response to U Thant's second message, U Thant immediately released for publication both his message and the responses to them by the Soviet Union and the USA. In so doing, U Thant again emphasized that now the whole world would be again convinced that the Soviet Union is positively and constructively working towards the peace initiative that it undertook, and he also asked to convey his thanks to the Soviet government and personally to N.S. Khrushchev for the speedy and positive response to his second message.

U Thant said furthermore that Kennedy's response to his second message was not as clear as N.S. Khrushchev's response. Nevertheless U Thant noted that, as he sees it, an agreement has been reached at the present moment between the Soviet Union and the USA which, although for only a short period (2 to 5 days, as he put it), ensures the possibility of avoiding dangerous encounters on the open sea. In this way, a situation will be created in which further steps can be taken towards the lessening of tensions.

Stevenson today announced to U Thant that the USA was prepared to approve U Thant's proposal contained in his first message (concerning the cessation for 2 to 3 weeks of arms stockpiling in Cuba, and the USA's simultaneous suspension of blockade activities), on the proviso that measures would be taken to guarantee that ships arriving in Cuba (Soviet ships, as well as freight vessels) are not supplying any weaponry during this this period.

U Thant explained that the satisfaction of this demand, either in this way or in some other fashion, is a very important issue for American public opinion. It would be possible to discuss a particular procedure for maritime traffic, or for particular ports of call in Cuba, whereby for example UN delegates from neutral countries, selected by agreement, or representatives of the International Red Cross might one way or another ascertain that vessels arriving in Cuba are not carrying arms. He implied that the Americans would apparently be satisfied with a simple procedure, and would not demand searches or inspections of vessels

bound for, or in the ports of, their destinations.

We declared to U Thant that the American proposal was at odds with U Thant's own proposal, and shows that the USA, unlike the Soviet Union, is not ready to agree to that proposal. We remarked that in giving consent to U Thant's proposal, the Soviet Union was taking a highly important step toward preserving the peace. We pointed out that the Soviet Union would stick to its obligations with unconditional steadfastness if an agreement was reached on the basis of U Thant's own proposal. No checks on this are needed, not only because of what has been put forth, but also because if the arms provisioning continued, it would not be hard to detect anyway. For this reason, the Americans' push for the above-mentioned proposal proves that they are looking for a pretext for not fulfilling the very agreement that would facilitate a conclusive settlement.

We also noted that while the USA is advancing a new proposal that complicates matters, they themselves are continuing to prepare intensively for an invasion of Cuba. If we are to talk about UN observation, then we must first of all demand an immediate end to that sort of military preparation against Cuba, which threatens the general peace.

We noted as well that we cannot enter discussions about what actions may be taken on Cuban territory, since that is a matter for the Cuban government alone to decide. But the forms of monitoring proposed would constitute an obvious interference in the domestic affairs of Cuba.

U Thant said that he understood all this personally, and that he firmly believed that the Soviet Union would keep its word. Nonetheless it is clear that the USA is acting as it is in order to justify before American public opinion its refusal to take the appropriate blockade measures that have been announced.

We told U Thant that the Soviet Union has already approved two of his proposals, proceeding in such a way as to frustrate the American provocation that threatens the peace, and also that it is now up to U Thant, in his capacity as acting General Secretary of the UN, to exert the necessary pressure on the USA with the aim of reaching a provisional agreement for 2 to 3 weeks, based on the initial proposal of U Thant himself.

We emphasized that it is necessary to act quickly, since our ships cannot remain on the open sea for an indefinite period of time, and since the situation cannot be allowed to get out of control. U Thant said that he would do all he could, although he asks us as well to think of measures that would be favorably received by the USA.

At the end of the conversation, U Thant said that today he had presented the Cuban delegate to the UN with the message, to be conveyed to Castro, in which he asked that missile installation work in Cuba, which according to reports received by him from the Americans continues day and night, be suspended for the 2 to 3 week period that is necessary for negotiations.

In response to our question about what plans U Thant had concerning the basis upon which a conclusive settlement would be attainable, U Thant answered that he found the key to this in Dorticos's speech to the General Assembly on 8 October of this year, in which the latter announced that if the USA were to give effective guarantees that they will not undertake a military invasion of Cuba, and will not aid its invasion by anyone else, it would not be necessary for Cuba to take military measures, or even to maintain its army.

U Thant said that today he had explained his point of view to Stevenson, and that the latter had promised to inform Kennedy about it.

In conclusion, we arranged with U Thant that he inform the Americans of our conversation, and agreed that our forthcoming meeting would be contingent upon how events unfold.

At the next meeting, if we do not receive other instructions, we will continue to push for the provisional agreement on the 2 to 3 week period, based on U Thant's proposal that was approved in Comrade N. S. Khrushchev's response, without the supplementary conditions advanced by the USA.

26.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

**Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister
Gromyko to USSR Ambassador to
Cuba Alekseev, 27 October 1962**

27 October 1962

You should urgently meet comrade Fidel Castro and, quoting instructions of the Soviet government, say the following:

"It is considered in Moscow that comrade Fidel Castro should urgently make a statement in support of the proposals of the Soviet government listed in the message from N.S. Khrushchev to President Kennedy of October 27.

It would be also advisable to give a quick answer to the appeal from U Thant and underline in that response that there are no works in Cuba on construction of military units - the issue mentioned in the appeal by U Thant. In addition, in the letter to U Thant it should be also advisable to voice support for the proposals of the Soviet government espoused in the aforementioned message from N.S. Khrushchev.

Regarding the communication (delivered by comrades Fidel Castro and Oswaldo Dorticos to comrade Alekseev) that according to the available data an armed American intervention in Cuba is imminent, we would like to say that our last action of October 27 is intended precisely to interrupt the past or present USA preparations, if indeed your information about the threat of an invasion was correct.

It is almost impossible for the Americans to launch an adventurist invasion of Cuba, using their armed forces, in response to our steps, undertaken in connection with U Thant's initiative, particularly in response to our last action. They know very well that if under present circumstances they were to start an intervention it would brand them as aggressors and hold them up to shame as enemies of peace imitating the worst patterns of Hitlerian perfidy."⁸

You should inform comrade Pavlov [a pseudonym for USSR Gen. Issa A. Pliyev, commander of Soviet forces in Cuba] about our advice to the Cuban friends.

Wire the report on the fulfillment of these instructions.

A. GROMYKO

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy ob-

tained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

**Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to
Cuba A.I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign
Ministry, 27 October 1962**

27 October

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

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

**Telegram from Soviet delegate to the
United Nations V. A. Zorin to USSR
Foreign Ministry, 27 October 1962**

27 October 1962

On 27 October I visited U Thant and gave him Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's letter of 27 October, as well as a copy of the message to Kennedy of the same date.

U Thant said that he would study the documents attentively, and that he hoped they would prove to be a constructive contribution to the resolution of the problem.

U Thant then informed me that around noon today Stevenson had visited him and told him about N.S. Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 26 October of this year. Stevenson did not leave U Thant the text of this message, saying that Kennedy had not authorized him to do so.

It must however be noted that, as Stevenson told U Thant, Kennedy is examining this message in a positive and benevolent frame of mind. Stevenson also let a mistake pass when giving an account of the 26 October message to U Thant, declaring that this message allegedly says that the Soviet Union is prepared to remove all its missiles, missile launch pads, and warheads from Cuba.

We indicated that the message made no mention of such points, but we declined to discuss the matter, pleading our lack of authorization to do so.

U Thant asked us to convey to him, if possible, the text of the above-mentioned message of 26 October in order to take it into account when he examines N.S. Khrushchev's message of 27 October.

Later we asked what U Thant had accomplished in the past 24 hours by way of progress towards the provisional agreement, for 2 to 3 weeks, based on the proposal approved by the Soviet Union (whereby the USSR suspends arms stockpiling in Cuba, and the USA suspends its blockade activities).

U Thant responded that he had not yet discussed that matter with Stevenson again, and was waiting for Cuba's response to his 26 October message on the suspension of missile-base construction. He again reiterated that the USA was very concerned that work there, including the assembly of bombers, is proceeding day and night. "After receiving the Cuban response," U Thant said, "I intend to put before Cuba the possibility of creating some monitoring device (in ports of call) for ascertaining that ships arriving in Cuba are not carrying arms."

We again asserted our negative view of the USA demands that go beyond the bounds of U Thant's proposal, and we insisted that he exert the necessary pressure on the Americans to make them adopt his plan. In all respects it was clear that in the last 24 hours U Thant under American pressure had not taken the necessary measures in that direction, and that he intended to win consent, if only from the Cubans, for establishing a procedure that to some degree at least could be considered to guarantee that ships arriving in the next 2 to 3 weeks in Cuba are not carrying arms. We expressed our dissatisfaction with that course of affairs, and stressed the importance of immediately winning approval for this procedure in order to avert the threat of armed encounter, after which any further negotiations would be rendered impossible.

U Thant said that he shared our concern, and would take action.

U Thant tried (honoring Stevenson's request) to give us the USA legation's letter to the Soviet government, which contained a description of the blockade area around Cuba, on the pretext that N.S. Khrushchev's response to U Thant's second message allegedly contains an agreement to avoid clashes between Soviet vessels and the American naval ships carrying out the blockade, and because they claim that it is important to know which areas are forbidden. We refused to accept this letter on the grounds that, as is well known, the Soviet government considers the blockade illegal (in this we were bearing in mind the fact that in Moscow similar notes from the USA were also returned). U Thant said that he would give the indicated letter back to Stevenson.

(The letter indicated that the blockade area includes: the region with its center in Havana and with a radius of 500 nautical miles, and the region with its center in Cape Maisi on the eastern extremity of Cuba and with a radius of 500 nautical miles as well.)

U Thant gave us the letter in which he expresses his sincere thanks to N.S. Khrushchev for his very constructive 26 October response to U Thant's message of 25 October of this year.

It should be noted that the UN delegates from the neutral countries, like the United Arab Republic and Ghana, have begun to calm down a bit in recent days, since Soviet efforts were able to avert dangerous

clashes in the very first days after the American provocation. Now they have started to say that the settlement of the conflict is mainly a concern for the USSR and the USA, that smaller countries cannot advise great powers on what they should do, and so on.

We will continue to exert pressure on U Thant and the UN delegates from the neutral countries (in particular, we had a conversation today to this effect with the delegate from the United Arab Republic in the Security Council) with the aim of persuading them to support the Soviet proposals, and of exerting pressure on the USA and its allies.

It would be expedient to give U Thant the text of Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 26 October, since Stevenson has already informed him about it, albeit in his own interpretation.

We request your consent.

27.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

**Telegram from USSR Foreign Ministry
to Soviet diplomats in Washington,
Havana, and New York,
28 October 1962**

SOVIET EMBASSY WASHINGTON

SOVIET EMBASSY HAVANA

Copy: New York

To Comrades Kuznetsov, Zorin

On 27 October of this year, the USA consul in Moscow sent a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs telling of the procedure introduced by the USA government with regard to the so-called quarantine, a procedure that will be carried out abroad by USA consulate officials, and within the United States by customs personnel.

In accordance with this procedure, foreign ships bound for Cuba or in transit inside the interception area are required to present to the USA customs official a "Transit Notification" or a "Certificate of the Completion of Customs Formalities."

Samples of the above-mentioned documents were appended to the letter.

On 28 October of this year, the USA embassy forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the text of the letter that Stevenson gave U Thant concerning the interception areas for vessels.

Both documents have been returned to the American embassy.

This is conveyed for purposes of intelligence and familiarization.

(illegibly signed)

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet delegate to the United Nations Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 28 October 1962, on meeting with Cuban delegate to the UN Garcia-Inchaustegui on 27 October 1962

28 October 1962

1. The UN delegate from Cuba, Garcia-Inchaustegui, has conveyed the following information about his meeting with U Thant on 27 October.

U Thant expressed gratitude for the invitation to visit Cuba that had been extended to him; he valued it as a highly important step, and on 28 October promised to give a definitive answer.

My visit to Cuba, the presence of UN representatives there, declared U Thant, would help avert American aggression against Cuba, since the USA could not carry out an attack while he was there.

U Thant said that in the event that he decides to go, he would intend to take several aides and experts along with him.

U Thant also asked whether the government of Cuba (in the event of his group's journey to Havana) could, on its own initiative, and not because they were official observers, invite U Thant to see first hand whether the construction of missile launch pads and the assembly of bombers had been suspended.

Before this, U Thant had told Garcia-Inchaustegui that Stevenson today had put

a request before U Thant to organize the visit so that UN representatives could conduct an on-site inspection on the cessation of the construction projects mentioned above.

In doing so, said U Thant, Stevenson emphasized in various ways that if these projects had not been stopped, then the USA would take new actions. In response to Garcia-Inchaustegui's question as to what this would mean concretely, Stevenson referred, said U Thant, to the strengthening of the blockade and to a USA demand for the convocation of the Security Council.

According to U Thant, Stevenson also said that Kennedy is examining with great earnestness and urgency the idea put forward by Dorticos in his 8 October speech before the General Assembly as the basis for a settlement.

U Thant then put before the Cubans the matter of the establishing of some procedure that would help ascertain that vessels arriving in Cuba in the next 2 to 3 weeks are not supplying arms.

With regard to the issue of Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message of 27 October, U Thant declared that the formulation contained in it appears to him a positive one.

2. Garcia-Inchaustegui informed us that at 20:30 Eastern Standard Time he heard a Cuban radio broadcast from Havana about the downing by Cuban coastal batteries of an American plane that had invaded Cuban air space.

28.X.62 V. ZORIN

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to USSR Ambassador to Cuba Alekseev, 28 October 1962

28 October 1962

You should meet comrade Fidel Castro and tell him the following:

"In Moscow they have received information from comrade Zorin regarding U Thant's proposal to the Cuban representative at the UN about the possibility of his

trip to Cuba and granting him [and] accompanying aides and experts an opportunity to see themselves that work on creating launchers, characterized by Americans as offensive weapons, had stopped.

Moscow adheres to the opinion that U Thant should be given a positive answer to his appeal. If the Cuban friends share this view we shall inform comrade Pavlov [Pliyev] and give him corresponding instructions about access to launchers for U Thant and accompanying persons.

As is generally known, U Thant made a proposal so that representatives of the International Red Cross (IRC) were allowed to visit Soviet ships going to Cuba in order to ascertain that there are no weapons, seen by the American administration as offensive. We sent instructions to our representatives to the UN in order to give consent to that suggestion, bearing in mind that transportation of the IRC to the Soviet ships will also be done on Soviet vessels or ships of neutral countries.

We would like to inform you that ships going to Cuba right now do not carry any weapons."

Telegraph the report on the fulfillment of these instructions.

A. GROMYKO

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

**III. THE AFTERMATH:
28 OCTOBER-10 DECEMBER 1962**

Cable from USSR Ambassador to Cuba Alekseev to Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 October 1962

28 October 1962

Due to F. Castro's absence from Havana and according to his instructions, I gave both letters to President Dorticos.⁹ In my presence Dorticos called Castro and informed him in a prearranged form that the letters had been received. Castro promised to meet me on his return.

Upon several statements and Dorticos' reaction to N.S. Khrushchev's letter to F.

Castro and to the latest message to Kennedy about the dismantling of special weaponry it became clear that confusion and bewilderment are reigning inside the Cuban leadership.

Dorticos said that, unfortunately, Cuban and Latin American peoples would perceive the decision to dismantle the special weaponry, relying only upon Kennedy's assurances, as a defeat for the Soviet government.

He said that whatever assertions Kennedy made, the Cuban government could not weaken its vigilance.

We understand, declared Dorticos, that this decision of the Soviet government is directed to the preserving of peace and in the end it will be advantageous for the whole socialist camp, including Cuba, but under the present conditions of great patriotic enthusiasm of our people this report would be perceived by infinitely electrified masses as a cold shower.

He said that for the Cuban leaders the most important thing right now is to preserve the Soviet Union's prestige, which had been raised so high in Cuba.

According to him, the counterrevolution will immediately seize this opportunity and direct all its work to revive distrust toward the Soviet Union.

Here, said Dorticos, we must rise to the occasion in order to explain correctly to our people the meaning of the adopted decisions.

He declared that under the created circumstances the Cubans were obliged to publish a statement, differing in tone from N.S. Khrushchev's letter, and there was suggested a preliminary acceptance by the Americans of the five [Cuban] conditions, including evacuation of the Guantanamo base. (transmitted to TASS)

Besides, Dorticos explained, we found ourselves in a difficult situation insofar as we had officially declared that we would not allow any UN observers on our territory.

Until a certain time we will have to stick to this "maximum program" and seek ways of achieving an honorable agreement which could be reached only if we receive from the USA absolute guarantees of our security.

According to Dorticos, no Kennedy statements could be trusted inasmuch as even now the piratical flights over Cuban territory were occurring and this was done not without Kennedy's knowledge.

Dorticos considers that the Americans, probably, will not stop at our consent to dismantle bases of special weapons and will demand additional concessions, in particular, the withdrawal of all the [Soviet] military units.

He also showed concern about possible solution of the question of the remaining in Cuba of our military specialists and the defensive weapons at their disposal, attached for the defense of military objectives.

Dorticos didn't say it openly, but permitted me to understand that the Cubans were not happy with our decision [to remove the missiles under UN inspection] undertaken without previously consulting them.

I told them that the small delay [in providing] the letter [from Khrushchev to Kennedy] was due to merely technical reasons (enciphering, transmission, translation) and made the assumption that insofar as the Cuban comrades had several times informed Moscow about the inevitability of [U.S.] intervention and bombings, probably, some quick and operational actions were needed, so there was no time for coordinations. Dorticos agreed.

After my visit to Dorticos, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez came to see me (he was informed by Dorticos about the content of the letter from N.S. Khrushchev to Fidel Castro) and presented a dismal picture of incomprehension among the Cuban people and several leaders of our decision to dismantle the special installations.

He said that a lot of people think that all our specialists and their weapons would be withdrawn and they were taking it hard.

According to C.R. Rodriguez, F. Castro has also reacted very painfully regarding this decision—and not the content of the decision itself because he considered it to be advantageous for mankind and the Cuban people—but the procedure of its adoption—without a previous consultation.

Particularly, he said, Dorticos had a presentiment that Castro's dissatisfaction would be caused by the phrase that the text of the response to Kennedy was being transmitted by radio.

C.R. Rodriguez explained that F. Castro was defending our decision in conversations with the Cuban leaders, trying to convince them that its results would be seen later, but he had not yet found intelligible arguments for an electrified people. But the most important [thing] is that he skeptically

regards Kennedy's assurances and is convinced that the Americans will go further and put forward new demands.

In my conversations with Dorticos and Rodriguez I said that, in my view, the decision on dismantling those installations did not interfere with Cuban defensive interests. It will not only save universal peace and ensure its strengthening, but this decision of the Soviet Government will eliminate the threat of invasion to Cuba and make it more difficult in the future.

Regarding the issue of the incomprehension of this decision by the politically literate groups of the population, I said that this phenomenon had to be very short and the people itself would understand the wisdom of the decision and thus raise its political maturity. We are confident that Dorticos, Rodriguez, F. Castro and the majority of the [Cuban] leaders will understand correctly our decision and we will find a common language with them. Indeed, there are difficulties to explain it to the people, insofar as it has been excited beyond limits by anti-American propaganda, but we consider that there will not be serious consequences and the nearest future will prove the correctness of our decision.

28/X/62 A. ALEKSEEV

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.*]

Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Foreign Ministry A.A. Gromyko and Cuban Ambassador to the USSR Carlos Olivares Sanchez, 29 October 1962

29 October 1962

At the request of Olivares Sanchez [I] received him at 16.00. [4 p.m.]

The Ambassador asked [me] to inform him about our assessment of the international situation created as a result of the naval blockade around Cuba, announced by the USA administration.

[I] Responded to him that we, the Soviet Government, consider to be a good one the outcome of the recent events in the Car-

ibbean. As a result of the efforts undertaken by the Soviet and Cuban sides there have been received guarantees on the part of the USA administration of non-aggression against the Republic of Cuba, which will be officially formalized after the end of negotiations with the participation of Mr. U Thant, Acting UN Secretary General. In our opinion the result is also a further strengthening of the international position of the Republic of Cuba. Nowadays the Cuban people is seen even more than before as a heroic people who has convincingly demonstrated to the whole world its resoluteness to defend—arms in hand—the liberty and independence of its motherland.

Olivares asked about our opinion regarding the statement made by Fidel Castro on October 28 of the current year.

[I] Responded to him that this statement has received the full comprehension and support of the Soviet Government.

Speaking of time limits for the withdrawal from Cuba of the “Soviet weapons for strategic defense” the Ambassador asked to be informed if those armaments would be returned to the Soviet Union before the Americans fulfill the Cuban government’s demand for liquidation of the USA navy base in Guantanamo.

[I] Responded to him that, in our opinion, the solution of the question of the liquidation of the Guantanamo base, apparently, will require a long time and therefore the presence of certain types of Soviet armaments in Cuba during that period will hardly contribute to solving it positively.

Olivares asked if this meant that the Soviet armaments would be withdrawn from Cuba before the USA administration satisfies other demands listed by Fidel Castro in his statement: to end the economic blockade, subversive activity, piratical actions, and incursions of whatever kind into the air space or territorial waters of Cuba.

[I] Responded to him that when we are speaking about the return of Soviet armaments from Cuba to the USSR we mean only a certain kind of armaments, but not armaments in general. Regarding the fulfillment of the above-listed demands of the Cuban government, we see it as a process that requires a certain time to satisfy all the demands mentioned in the cited statement by Fidel Castro.

Having made a reference to a note received from the Embassy of Sudan and other

available data, Olivares informed [me] that a series of neutral countries accuse Cuba of violating the Belgrade Declaration, explaining their conclusions by the accepted fact of the presence of a “Soviet military base” in Cuba.

[I] Told Olivares that such assumptions do not have the slightest grounds. Each country can use the right not only for individual, but also a collective defense against aggression. It is clear that being the object of continuous aggressive provocations on the part of the USA and even having already been a victim of invasion, Cuba cannot become like a frog voluntarily jumping into the boa’s jaws. Measures undertaken by the Cuban government to strengthen its national defenses are in full accordance with international law and do not contradict a single commonly accepted international norm.

At the conclusion of the conversation Olivares expressed his desire to broaden contacts between officials of the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] of the USSR and those of the Cuban embassy in such circumstances. He spoke about his interest to receive from the MFA a more complete information [report] about the most important decisions adopted in Moscow and referring to Soviet-Cuban relations, for his own orientation and in order to have the possibility to inform his government personally.

[I] Responded to him that I do understand such an interest, adding that the Ambassador’s desire would certainly be taken into account. [I] Explained that during the recent events we were obliged, in order to save time, to use communication lines of our Embassy in Havana, which ensure an uninterrupted, secure, and quick transmission of reports to Cuba. The Ambassador said that he entirely understands this and agrees with this. He gave me to understand that from the point of view of reliability (code) the communication through our Embassy in Havana is a more suitable method than through the Cuban embassy in Moscow.

In parting Olivares expressed deep gratitude to the peoples of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government for continuous support of the Cuban people’s struggle for the independence of their motherland.

[I] Thanked Olivares for these sentiments.

At the conversation were present: A. Gonzales, Ambassador’s translator, and V.

Chernyshov, Second Secretary of the Latinamerican Department.

A. GROMYKO

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

Record of Conversation between Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and U.N. Secretary-General U Thant, 29 October 1962

From the diary of V. V. Kuznetsov

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION WITH ACTING U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL U THANT on 29 October 1962

The meeting took place in the UN Secretariat. Present were: on the Soviet side, V.A. Zorin, P.D. Morozov, L.I. Mendelevich, and V.N. Zherebtsov; from the UN Secretariat, U Thant, E.D. Kiselev, O. Loutfi, Narasimhan, and General Rikhye.

At the beginning of the conversation, V.V. Kuznetsov conveyed to U Thant the heartfelt greetings of Comrade N.S. Khrushchev, and the latter’s great appreciation for U Thant’s efforts in a noble endeavor, the attainment of a speedy settlement of the Cuban crisis.

He said that the government of the USSR had ordered him to arrive in New York to aid U Thant in his efforts to eliminate the dangerous situation that has arisen. Although the USSR’s position with regard to the crisis in the Caribbean area seems to be quite familiar to U Thant, V.V. Kuznetsov would nevertheless like to make use of this first meeting with U Thant first and foremost emphasize to certain basic features of the Soviet Union’s position, and the steps taken by the USSR government to assure the fastest possible settlement of the crisis through peaceful means, with the goal of affirming peace and security, and taking into account the interests of all parties.

V. V. Kuznetsov reminded U Thant that the government of the Soviet Union has introduced a series of constructive proposals that received general recognition, and that

provide a good and fair foundation for resolving the whole problem. The Soviet government, bearing in mind U Thant's recommendation, has undertaken to suspend temporarily the traffic of its ships bound for Cuba, and to keep them away for a short period of time from the region declared by the United States as being under quarantine.

The government of the USSR has also declared that on board these ships there are not, and will not be, any arms that President Kennedy and the USA government see as "offensive."

Later the government of the USSR agreed to dismantle and send back to the Soviet Union the launchers now in Cuba that are seen by the United States as "offensive."

In brief, said V.V. Kuznetsov, the government of the USSR has undertaken to approve and accept U Thant's proposal; at the same time it has declared and still declares that for its part it will take any and all measures to prevent an exacerbation of the situation, which could lead to a worsening of the conflict and an unleashing of thermonuclear war. In its actions the government of the USSR is bearing in mind the sincere desire of nations to safeguard peace and calm throughout the globe.

The Soviet government has stressed and continues to stress that the actions of the United States, manifested by the imposition of the blockade, as well as the whole USA policy towards Cuba, are aggressive, and aimed at an exacerbation of the situation rather than a normalization of it. There is no need at present to provide a detailed description of American actions during the past week. That has lucidly been done by the Soviet government's statement, as well as by N.S. Khrushchev's messages to the USA President Kennedy and to U Thant.

If it were to assess the situation as it exists today, V.V. Kuznetsov continued, the Soviet government would note with satisfaction, as has already been noted in N.S. Khrushchev's message, that the USA at the present moment has taken a position which makes it possible to settle the whole Cuban problem on the basis of the Soviet proposals. All this has been the result of the efforts made by the Soviet government, as well as by the United Nations Organization and by U Thant himself. The Soviet Union acknowledges the great efforts that were displayed by U Thant.

President Kennedy's latest response to

N.S. Khrushchev's message testifies to the fact that the American government believes it possible to reach an agreement on the basis of the USSR's proposals. This we consider to be a positive factor. With regard to this it seems to us that the moment has arrived for making a transition from general statements to concrete matters. The government of the USSR is ready to do so.

U Thant has expressed his hope that the exchange of opinions will be fruitful and positive, and that it will help eliminate the threat now present in the Caribbean region. He has also expressed his thanks to N.S. Khrushchev for his greetings and his appreciation of his (U Thant's) efforts to maintain peace. U Thant has asked V.V. Kuznetsov to convey his sincere gratitude for all the understanding and cooperation he has received.

After this U Thant said that he recognizes the danger of the existing situation. That danger intensified late Saturday night and early Sunday morning. At that time there were indications that the point of no return had arrived. U Thant did not sleep that night, conducting endless consultations with Narasimhan and Rikhye. Fortunately nothing tragic occurred.

Khrushchev's response yesterday to Kennedy's message represents a very great commitment to the peaceful resolution of the Cuban crisis. U Thant emphasized that this was not just his personal opinion, but also the opinion of all his colleagues and the overwhelming majority of the permanent UN delegates with whom he has met. For this fruitful and positive gesture, said U Thant, the whole world expressed its gratitude to N.S. Khrushchev and to the government of the Soviet Union.

U Thant said that he too was concerned about the continuing blockade of Cuba on the part of the United States. He recalled his own proposals for a voluntary suspension by the Soviet Union of arms stockpiling in Cuba for a short period of time in return for the United States' voluntary suspension of the blockade. After three-day talks on this issue with the Soviet delegate to the UN, V.A. Zorin, and the USA delegate to the UN Stevenson, U Thant put all his efforts, he said, into finding the fastest resolution of this issue.

At the present time, U Thant said, after his trip to Cuba had been decided, and after the conversation taking place between

V.A. Zorin and U Thant on 28 October, he again addressed a request to the United States to suspend its blockade. In doing so he emphasized that the Soviet Union had undertaken to give orders to its ships to temporarily suspend traffic to Cuba, which signals the acceptance by the Soviet Union of the preliminary settlement proposed by U Thant. U Thant said that he had also declared to the Americans that a continuation of the blockade is especially undesirable during his visit to Cuba. U Thant has still not received a response from the Americans, but hopes to have one in the near future, possibly even today.

V.V. Kuznetsov thanked U Thant for the warm words addressed to the USSR government and personally to N.S. Khrushchev, and said that he would immediately convey them to their destination.

V.V. Kuznetsov agreed that the time has come for turning to concrete problems and ranking them on the basis of their urgency and importance. He was happy to note that, in his outlines as in U Thant's plans, the quarantine issue occupies first place. This suggests that our thoughts and desires are heading in the same direction.

In connection with this, V.V. Kuznetsov recalled that the Soviet government, as N.S. Khrushchev informed U Thant on 25 October, had accepted the first proposal of U Thant, which stipulated in particular a voluntary suspension of all arms transfers to Cuba for a period of two to three weeks, and the simultaneous temporary cessation of the quarantine activity on the part of the United States.

The most recent declarations of the USSR government have created even more favorable conditions for carrying out the proposal to end the quarantine. Nevertheless the quarantine activity still continues. However, as U Thant knows, ship captains have received instructions to remain on the open sea, outside the boundaries of the quarantine activity, for a certain period of time. Such a situation cannot continue for long, since it is depriving Cuba of peaceful goods that are necessary to it, it is creating difficulties for the fueling of the ships remaining on the open sea, and it is incurring losses because of their enforced inactivity. With regard to this, we welcomed U Thant's thoughts on the necessity of resolving this whole issue in the next one or two days. But the imposed quarantine has already been

going on for more than five days, and now there are no longer any reasons for not suspending the quarantine activity.

The declaration of the quarantine by the United States is illegal, and is recognized as such by the whole world. Nevertheless, proceeding from the situation at hand and guided by the interests of peace, the government of the USSR at the present moment is set on the issue of suspending the practical operations of the quarantine. It is quite natural that we would like these operations to cease immediately. In any case we have every right to expect a response from the United States in the very near future, perhaps even before U Thant's departure for Cuba.

U Thant again repeated that the day before he had addressed this question to the Americans, and was awaiting an answer from them that day.

V.V. Kuznetsov asked U Thant what the basic difficulties were in settling this issue.

U Thant answered that the Americans are fully aware of the instructions given to Soviet ships to remain for a short period of time outside the boundaries of the quarantine activity. They are also aware that these instructions have a definite time limit. Before this they have been trying to avoid direct contact between Soviet and American vessels. However, the Americans are afraid that if they allow Soviet ships to approach Cuba, those ships may be carrying arms. For this reason they are insisting that some mechanism be created for ascertaining whether or not such ships are conveying weaponry.

After his talks with V.A. Zorin, U Thant met with the UN delegate from Cuba, Garcia-Inchaustegui, to whom he declared that, since the USSR is not agreeing to the creation of some verification mechanism for ships on the open sea, he, U Thant, proposes to the government of Cuba to examine the possibility of creating such a mechanism in ports of call. In doing so he informed the Cuban delegate of the Soviet views on this matter.

V.V. Kuznetsov thanked U Thant for the information, and said that he understood the latter's position.

He went on to say that the government of the USSR has examined in a spirit of cooperation the ideas expressed by U Thant on the fastest suspension of the quarantine. U Thant proposed three possible ways in

which the issue could be resolved:

- 1) the monitoring of Soviet vessels by American ships;
- 2) checks on the vessels by certain neutral countries;
- 3) sharing these functions with the International Red Cross.

The government of the USSR has examined the issue and has asked to communicate that, if U Thant is not successful in reaching an agreement with the Americans on the temporary suspension of the blockade with the observation of our vessels bound for Cuba, then the Soviet government is prepared to allow, as a temporary measure, the boarding of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba by representatives of the Red Cross for ascertaining that those ships contain no sorts of weapons that concern the President and government of the USA, who refer to them as "offensive weapons."

V.V. Kuznetsov emphasized that the USSR government, in taking this step, is acting on a sincere desire to resolve this problem in the interests of peace, taking into full account the position of the Republic of Cuba.

U Thant expressed his thanks to the government of the Soviet Union for this important decision, made with the purpose of reducing tension and contributing to settling the Cuban problem through peaceful means. He promised to convey immediately the content of this Soviet proposal to the United States.

V.V. Kuznetsov noted that, in accepting one of U Thant's ideas, the Soviet government had not yet worked out the details of the monitoring system, but is raising the possibility that Red Cross representatives could be conveyed onto the Soviet vessels either by Soviet ships, or by the ships of neutral countries. As far as possible cargo checks in the ports of call are concerned, this issue is for the Cuban government to decide, since that is its own territory, and the Soviet government itself cannot make any decision on this matter without Cuban consent.

U Thant thanked V.V. Kuznetsov for his explanation, and said that he would immediately pass this information on to the government of Cuba.

U Thant noted that in the event that the Red Cross takes on the execution of these functions, he himself would determine, according to existing practices and rules of

procedure, the national composition of the inspectors. He asked V. V. Kuznetsov to give his opinion on this matter.

V. V. Kuznetsov said again that we had not yet given thought to the details, but that we would prefer that the groups of Red Cross inspectors be made up of citizens of neutral countries. If U Thant has any thoughts, then they could be discussed, and the Soviet government's views on them could be sought.

U Thant said that, as practice shows, in all cases in which the aid of the Red Cross was requested, the national make-up of its representatives was 95% Swiss.

V. V. Kuznetsov asked U Thant that on future considerations of this matter he take into account our views, as well as the fact that Switzerland is not a member of the UN.

Then he asked U Thant to describe the goal of his trip to Cuba, and any thoughts he has in connection with this trip.

U Thant said that the problem most immediately faced by the Security Council involves three governments: those of the Soviet Union, the USA, and Cuba. For the USA the most urgent problem is the lifting of the quarantine. For the USSR, it is the matter of arms provisioning, the dismantling of missile launchers, and the shipping of them back to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has already given its consent to all this, and has even agreed to the 2 to 3 week arms provisioning point. The United States has not fully agreed to U Thant's proposal. The quarantine continues even now, and the United States is demanding the creation of a mechanism for ascertaining that arms provisioning is not continuing.

The Soviet Union's decision on the possible use of Red Cross services will in many ways contribute to the settling of this problem.

One of the goals that U Thant is setting for himself on his trip to Cuba is get an idea of what is being done or has already been done with regard to the removal of missile launchers from Cuba. He intends to give a report on this to the Security Council.

U Thant intends moreover to discuss with Castro measures for the safeguarding of the security of Cuba, as well as for the elimination of threats from the USA and certain other countries of Latin America. U Thant emphasized that precise and definite guarantees were equally important both for

the United States and other Latin American countries, and for Cuba. For this reason, U Thant intends to propose that United Nations observers be placed not only on Cuban territory, but also on the territory of the United States and several Latin American countries neighboring Cuba.

V. V. Kuznetsov said that we now have a clearer idea of the task that U Thant is setting for himself during his trip to Cuba. In connection with this he expressed some of the Soviet views on this matter. First and foremost, Kuznetsov stressed, as is already known from N. S. Khrushchev's messages, the missile installations in Cuba are in the hands of Soviet specialists. The Soviet government has stated that it is dismantling and removing these launchers from Cuba.

It is evident from the message sent by N. S. Khrushchev to Kennedy on 27 October and from the later message with which the American government generally agreed, that the Soviet government has agreed to the imposition of on-site checks after the above-mentioned dismantlings, of course with the consent of the government of the Republic of Cuba.

V. V. Kuznetsov asked whether the Americans are not moving away from the position laid out in Kennedy's message.

V. V. Kuznetsov expressed his agreement with the Soviet Union's granting of guarantees on arms provisioning and the dismantling of missile installations, and so too the United States should make guarantees to the effect that it will not infringe upon the security and sovereignty of Cuba either with its own armed forces, or through support for other countries, and that it will not permit or aid the activity on its own territory of subversive sabotage groups. These pledges must be firm.

We have made note of Kennedy's statement that the USA will guarantee that no aggression against Cuba will take place. However, on one hand Kennedy declares that the Soviet Union's statements are reassuring, while on the other hand the USA is making new demands that place the two parties in unfairly different positions.

V. V. Kuznetsov concluded that his idea comes down to the point that the statements existing at the present time are sufficient to lift the quarantine without having to take any measures related to the speedy establishment of checks on the dismantling of missile sites in Cuba.

With regard to this he recalled N. S. Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 28 October, which said that the Soviet Union was prepared to reach an agreement with the United States on the possibility of UN representatives monitoring this dismantling process. In doing so, Khrushchev referred to his earlier message of 27 October, which said that agents of the UN Security Council could conduct on-site inspections on the fulfillment of the obligations that have been taken on. Of course it will be necessary to receive the permission of the government of the Republic of Cuba to allow these authorized officials to enter the country.

U Thant declared that he now understands better the problem connected with establishing on-site inspections on the dismantling and removal of the missile launchers from Cuba. Now, after N. S. Khrushchev's messages of 27 and 28 October, and the explanations offered by V. V. Kuznetsov, he has a clear idea of the Soviet government's position.

During his stay in Cuba he, U Thant, intends to raise the issue of the dismantling and removal of missile materials from Cuba in his talks with Prime Minister Fidel Castro, and it is possible that the latter will have something to say on this matter.

Returning to the question of guarantees, U Thant said that such guarantees should be bilateral. On his own initiative he decided to raise the issue of the presence of UN representatives in all the countries of this region. If the government of Cuba agrees to some UN presence, said U Thant, then he intends to propose to the Organization of American States and the United States to admit UN representatives onto the territory of the USA and the Latin American countries, in the interests of removing the threat to peace in this area. In its general outlines, U Thant has informed the Americans of this idea.

V. V. Kuznetsov declared that the Soviet Union has formulated its duties clearly and concisely, and that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about the fulfillment of these duties. As far as the USA guarantees to Cuba are concerned, they have already been generally laid out in outline form. With regard to this, V. V. Kuznetsov has directed U Thant's attention to the passage from N. S. Khrushchev's message of 27 October which refers to what the USA should do about making guarantees to Cuba,

and especially: the USA government will declare in the Security Council that the USA will respect the inviolability of Cuba's borders, its sovereignty, and that it pledges not to interfere in its domestic affairs, not to invade it or let its territory serve as a base for any invasion of Cuba, and that it will also restrain those who wish to take aggressive action against Cuba either from within USA territory, or from the territory of the countries that neighbor Cuba.

V. V. Kuznetsov remarked that, as can be inferred from the Soviet Union's proposals, the duties of all parties should be formulated and represented in the form of joint or individual declarations to the Security Council that express their positions. In this way such obligations will have a more definite character. This can be inferred as well from the proposals of U Thant himself.

According to the Soviet Union, in examining the issue of guarantees it is necessary to take into consideration the views that have been expressed on this matter by Prime Minister Castro of Cuba.

V. V. Kuznetsov again asked about the desirability of receiving an answer regarding the temporary suspension of the quarantine before U Thant's departure for Cuba. In doing so he emphasized that the Soviet Union for its part has made many conciliatory gestures, and that now it is necessary to persuade the other side to make similar ones.

U Thant said that he would immediately communicate information about the Soviet Union's favorable reaction to his proposal about possibly making use of the services of the Red Cross, and with regard to this he wanted to clarify certain details. First, in the event that the Red Cross agrees, the personnel of the inspection groups can be appointed only by that organization. The UN cannot make recommendations to it on that matter. Second, as U Thant understands it, vessels carrying the inspection groups will be supplied by the Soviet Union or neutral countries. Third, the Americans in their talks with U Thant have asked about the vessels chartered by the Soviet Union for carrying its own cargo.

V. V. Kuznetsov said that he was authorized, naturally, to speak only about Soviet vessels.

V. A. Zorin added that the Americans can be sure that Lebanese or Swedish vessels, say, are not carrying arms, as these

governments have officially declared.

V. V. Kuznetsov noted that if the USA wanted an agreement, they would have quickly resolved this matter. If they have no such desire, they can find a million pretexts and ask a million questions. V. A. Zorin said that such an agreement could indeed be reached today, since the positions of all the interested parties have in general been clearly presented.

At the conclusion of the meeting it was agreed that during U Thant's stay in Cuba, contact with him would be sustained through Narasimhan.

The conversation was recorded by V. Zharebtsov.

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov to USSR Foreign Ministry, 29 October 1962

29 October 1962

On 29 October we met with U Thant.

We conveyed greetings to U Thant from Comrade N.S. Khrushchev, as well as the latter's wishes for U Thant's success in averting a war, strengthening the peace, and safeguarding the security of all nations. U Thant was told that I had been entrusted by the Soviet government to aid him, U Thant, in his efforts to eliminate the current dangerous situation. We then laid out the basic points of the USSR's position in the Cuban affair, as they were defined in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's messages to Kennedy of 26, 27, and 28 October 1962. We noted that the USA had declared the Soviet proposals to be generally practicable, which allows the Cuban problem to be resolved on the basis of those Soviet proposals. We emphasized that in view of this, the moment had arrived for moving away from general statements about the positions of the parties, and towards an agreement on concrete steps to be taken. We declared that the Soviet government is ready to take on this practical work.

U Thant asked us to convey to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev his sincere gratitude

and best wishes. He remarked that the situation had been extraordinarily serious, especially towards the end of 27 October, although Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message of 28 October had relieved the situation. U Thant called that message "a most considerable contribution to peace" and emphasized that this was the general opinion in the UN.

U Thant said furthermore that he also considered it expedient to move towards the working out of an agreement on concrete measures for the settlement of the Cuban situation, and precisely for this purpose he had addressed a request the day before (on 28 October) to the Americans to lift the blockade of Cuba immediately (U Thant used the word "blockade") for a period of 2 to 3 weeks, as had been stipulated in U Thant's first message of 25 October. In doing so, U Thant emphasized that the USSR had already done what U Thant had requested in that message, suspending arms provisioning in Cuba, while the USA had not yet lifted the blockade. It still cannot be said that the Americans have done so, U Thant continued. For him (U Thant) a very strange situation could arise if he is in Cuba (he will fly to Havana tomorrow to meet with Fidel Castro), and the American navy is still continuing the blockade at that time.

We asked U Thant how the Americans are explaining their delay in accepting the decision about lifting the so-called quarantine, even though it is obvious that such a lifting is absolutely necessary both politically and practically. With regard to this, we pointed out the urgency of lifting the quarantine first and foremost because of the necessity of laying a foundation, as U Thant himself suggested, for negotiating a settlement of the Cuban problem. Moreover, because of the continuing blockade, ships carrying exclusively peace-time goods cannot get these goods to Cuba, where they are needed, and furthermore the ships are experiencing fueling difficulties, and their idleness is bringing losses. We emphasized that the Soviet Union has agreed to U Thant's proposal to hold back these vessels bound for Cuba for several days, but that the Americans keep prolonging the period.

U Thant answered that the Americans are demanding checks on the Soviet vessels carrying cargo to Cuba, as one of the conditions on their lifting the quarantine. With regard to this he said that the situation would

be relieved if the Soviet Union agreed to the carrying out of these checks through some "independent agency."

In accordance with your instructions, we informed U Thant that the Soviet government is prepared to give its consent to checks on Soviet vessels bound for Cuba, as U Thant proposed in one of his earlier talks with Comrade Zorin, by representative of the International Red Cross, if the USA refuses to lift the blockade unless such checks are instituted. I emphasized that this is of course a temporary measure, for 2 to 3 weeks until the settlement of the Cuban problem.

U Thant received this information with very great interest, and expressed gratitude to the Soviet government for this new and important step towards settling the Cuban conflict. He said that he would meet today with the Americans, and would secure the lifting of the "quarantine." With regard to the practical issues connected with our proposal for carrying out checks on vessels by representatives of the International Red Cross, we explained to U Thant in accordance with your instructions that the main issue here concerns the checks at sea, in which Red Cross representatives would be conveyed on board Soviet ships by USSR vessels or by those belonging to neutral countries. As far as checks in the ports are concerned, we noted that this falls not within our own jurisdiction, but that of the Cuban government. U Thant came back to this point several times, and it was clear that he prefers instituting checks in the Cuban ports. For our part we consider it feasible to agree with this, as long as our Cuban friends do not object. It is technically possible to carry out checks in ports much faster than on the open sea, and this would keep the Americans from delaying any longer the lifting of the "quarantine."

U Thant then asked how we feel about the fact that the Red Cross will use mainly Swiss personnel to carry out the checks. In doing so he emphasized that, as he knows from past experience, the International Red Cross does not accept any recommendations on the make-up of its personnel, and its own personnel is 95% Swiss. I said that we would prefer that the personnel of the inspection groups consisted of citizens from neutral countries that are represented in the UN.

U Thant also asked whether we agreed to the Red Cross checks on Soviet ships

only, or also on vessels chartered by the Soviet Union. We said that we cannot speak of any vessels other than Soviet ones, but that it would be absurd if the Americans started suspecting the Soviet Union of conveying arms that it calls “offensive” on chartered vessels belonging, for example, to Sweden or Lebanon. U Thant agreed that this would be an absurdity.

We asked U Thant what his intentions were with regard to the forthcoming negotiations in Cuba. U Thant said that he wanted to exchange views with Fidel Castro primarily on how the dismantling of war sites, which is referred to in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev’s message of 28 October, would be carried out.

We told U Thant that the military sites mentioned there were in the hands of Soviet officers. U Thant answered that he knew this, and of course would consult with the Soviet Union on this matter.

With regard to this, we reminded U Thant that, as noted in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev’s letter of 27 October, the checks should be carried out after the arms are removed from Cuba. What will have to be checked is not the weaponry, but the fact that it is no longer in Cuba. U Thant declined to spell out his own point of view on this matter. It can be supposed that the Americans will insist that inspections be carried out even during the process of dismantling.

U Thant said that he meant to exchange views with Fidel Castro as well on the matters connected with the checks on vessels bound for Cuba.

The goal of his trip to Cuba, U Thant said, would also be a discussion with Fidel Castro on obtaining guarantees for Cuban security, and guarantees for the security of other countries which maintain that Cuba represents a threat to them. He said that he wanted to propose to Castro a formulation that would stipulate a “UN presence” in Cuba on the model of the “UN presence” in the United Arab Republic (Gaza and Aqaba) as a guarantee that nobody will invade Cuba, and that Cuba will not take actions against anybody else.

We told U Thant that really the point about guarantees for Cuban security ought to constitute the most important part of the final settling of the whole problem. Kennedy’s statements on this matter are positive, but they seem to have a provisional character, and refer to Cuba’s inviolability

from attack in only a very general way. It is necessary to concretize these statements, and to confirm the whole settlement of the Cuban issue, including guarantees for Cuba’s security, through the Security Council. With regard to this we referred to the relevant point about guarantees on Cuban security contained in Comrade N. S. Khrushchev’s message of 27 October. We also recalled the guarantees that Fidel Castro demanded in his statement of 28 October.

U Thant did not show any reaction to any of this, although he did not object of any of it, but rather returned again to the question of a “UN presence” in Cuba. He said that if Fidel Castro approves this proposal, he will then address a similar proposal to the other party regarding the “UN presence” in the USA and certain Latin American countries. We were given to understand that the goal of this “UN presence” would be to avert attacks on Cuba by counterrevolutionary Cuban emigres now living in the USA and certain countries of Latin America.

We did not meanwhile express to U Thant our attitude to this proposal of his. We assume that it could be viewed positively when one takes into account that U Thant has in mind a “UN presence” on the territories of both parties—of Cuba as well as of the USA and certain Latin American countries. This would mean that with regard to this issue the UN would be keeping the same watch over Cuba as over the USA, which is certainly advantageous.

In their relations to us, the Americans are remaining passive, and decline to meet. Intending to initiate contact with Stevenson, we suggested to U Thant through Kiselev that he arrange a breakfast today and invite the Americans and us. U Thant liked this idea, and he contacted Stevenson. Stevenson, however, refused to accept his invitation, referring to the fact that he had no instructions from the State Department, and that without such authorization he could not meet with Soviet representatives.

29.X.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard Univer-*

sity.]

Telegram from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V. V. Kuznetsov to USSR Foreign Ministry, 30 October 1962

30 October 1962

On 29 October I received the permanent UN delegate from Cuba, Garcia-Inchaustegui. I welcomed him as representative of the courageous Cuban nation, which is self-sacrificingly standing up for its freedom and independence in its struggle with a powerful and dangerous enemy—American imperialism.

I said that I considered it necessary to meet first of all with the Cuban delegate, and I expressed the hope that, in carrying out the task that stands before us both, we would work in close contact with our Cuban comrades, keeping each other informed and consulting with each other.

Garcia-Inchaustegui gratefully acknowledged the constant support offered to the Cuban nation by the Soviet Union, and said that the Cuban delegates in New York also constantly feel support from their Soviet comrades in their joint work in the United Nations Organization.

Garcia-Inchaustegui said that he had had a meeting with U Thant during which they discussed the latter’s trip to Cuba. U Thant intends, after the negotiations in Havana, to leave General Rikhye behind in Cuba as his representative, along with a group of workers supposedly for continuing the negotiations with the Cuban government and for sustaining relations with the UN. The issue of leaving General Rikhye in Cuba will in Garcia-Inchaustegui’s opinion be the subject of negotiations between U Thant and the Cuban government in Havana.

On the question of the most urgent matters to which, in his view, U Thant’s attention should be given, Garcia-Inchaustegui said that the task of primary importance is the safeguarding of unhindered passage for vessels bound for Cuba and the lifting of the blockade. He has already spoken to U Thant about this, as well as with the delegates from other countries, especially the Afro-Asian countries.

Garcia-Inchaustegui said that the minister of foreign affairs Raul Roa would arrive in New York at the end of this week.

30.X.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

**Telegram from Deputy Foreign
Minister V. V. Kuznetsov to the Soviet
Foreign Ministry, 30 October 1962**

30 October 1962

On 29 October a second meeting with U Thant was held at his initiative.

1. U Thant informed me that the Americans have favorably received our agreement to the inspection of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba by representatives of the International Red Cross.

U Thant also informed us that he had contacted the Red Cross and received a preliminary response that the Red Cross was ready to undertake the inspection of vessels both on the open sea, and in ports of disembarkation. U Thant intends to negotiate with Fidel Castro on carrying out the inspection in ports.

In the Red Cross's preliminary response received by U Thant, it is indicated that all personnel carrying out the inspection of the vessels will consist of Swiss citizens.

2. U Thant explained to Stevenson our position on the inspection of the dismantlings and the removal of the so-called "offensive" weaponry from Cuba. The Americans asked U Thant to clarify how long the dismantling would take. On his own initiative U Thant put this question to us. We told U Thant that we would ask our government, but provisionally the dismantling will be expected to take 2 to 3 weeks. (In provisionally specifying this time frame, we were proceeding from the relevant points made in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 27 October.)

We request to be informed about the duration of the dismantling processes in order to give an answer to U Thant.

3. According to U Thant, the Americans are insisting that the monitoring of the dismantling be carried out during the very process of dismantling, and not after its

completion, especially if the dismantling is to take a long time. With regard to this it is advantageous to accelerate the dismantlings, in order not to show the installations to the inspectors. The Americans prefer that the inspection be carried out by the UN, and for the composition of the inspection groups they propose two variants: representatives of neutral countries, or representatives of the immediately interested parties—the USA, the USSR, and Cuba. The Americans, however, according to U Thant, have started insisting less strongly lately on UN inspection during the dismantling process. They are said to declare that if it is not possible to reach an agreement about UN inspections, they will carry out the inspections themselves, and that they have the necessary means to do so.

General Rikhye (U Thant's military advisor) who was present at the conversation explained that with inspections by their own forces, the Americans have in mind flights over Cuba by their own planes carrying photographic equipment, and at low altitudes.

U Thant told Stevenson that the UN can carry out dismantling inspections in Cuba only in the event that the Soviet Union and Cuba agree to it. He asked that there be notification of the Soviet government's position on inspection by UN forces during the dismantling process.

It appears to us expedient to insist on our present position, in accordance with which the appointees of the Security Council should carry out inspections not of the process of dismantling, but of the Soviet Union's fulfillment of its promise to dismantle the installations of weapons which the Americans refer to as "offensive." This would mean that the inspectors would be admitted to sites where there are installations when they have not yet been fully dismantled, and the arms not yet removed. In regard to this, it is expedient to speed up the dismantling of the installations and the removal of the arms. If the dismantling is carried out in a short time, then the issue of inspection during the dismantling process will not arise at all.

We request that you consider this.

4. During the talks with U Thant, his aides delivered reports to him on Kennedy's statement concerning the suspension of the "quarantine" of vessels bound for Cuba during the period of U Thant's stay in Cuba on

30 and 31 October. U Thant asked how we felt about this. We said that such a period was too short for even the vessels located near the blockade zone to make it to the ports of disembarkation.

U Thant noted in regard to this that he gave very great significance to the requirement that during his stay in Cuba his people, like Rikhye, be shown at least from a distance that the installations are being dismantled. In this case, U Thant said, on his return from New York he would issue a statement that his people have been convinced of the Soviet Union's fulfillment of its dismantling obligation, and that for this reason the "quarantine" should not be reimposed. U Thant asked whether the Soviet government could agree to this.

We propose that it would be appropriate to show U Thant himself the dismantling of certain installations during his stay in Cuba on 30 and 31 October. In such an event he would take a firmer stance, and it would be more difficult for the Americans to renew their "quarantine" of Cuba.

If this is recognized as expedient, I request urgently to give corresponding instructions to Havana.

30.X.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

**Telegram from Soviet Deputy Foreign
Minister Kuznetsov and Ambassador to
the UN Zorin to USSR Foreign
Ministry, 30 October 1962**

30 October 1962

On 30 October Comrade Zorin, in his capacity as chairman of the Security Council, the term of which expires tomorrow, held the traditional breakfast for members of the Council. Present were the heads of the delegations of all the countries represented by the Security Council, including Stevenson. From the talks during the breakfast, the following is worthy of attention:

1. Stevenson said that the government of the USA agrees to our proposal for checks on vessels carried out by representatives of

the International Red Cross, and prefers that such checks be carried out not on the open sea, but in Cuban ports.

Stevenson said furthermore that now the USA attributes primary importance to reaching an agreement on the inspection of the dismantling of the Soviet military emplacements in Cuba, insisting that such inspection be carried out during the dismantling process. The Americans imagine inspections, as Stevenson said, in the form of planes flying over Cuba with inspection groups on board.

2. The Irish delegate [Frederick H.] Boland voiced a proposal, clearly not without American consent, for convening the Security Council immediately after U Thant's return from Cuba, and, without discussing in detail any other matters at this meeting, to hear U Thant's report and make a decision about authorizing U Thant to create an inspection mechanism for the dismantlings in Cuba. As far as the other matters in the Cuban settlement are concerned, including the matter of guarantees for Cuban security, Boland believes that those matters can be raised in speeches at the above-mentioned meeting of the Security Council, but that approving resolutions on them should be left for a later date.

The delegates from the United Arab Republic (Riad) and Ghana (Quaison-Sackey) voiced objections to Boland's proposal (Riad more firmly, Quaison-Sackey somewhat evasively). They believe that the first priority is resolving the matter of guarantees for Cuban security.

3. The Ghanaian delegate Quaison-Sackey made several remarks about the Congo. The substance of these remarks comes down to the fact that the situation in the Congo is bad, is becoming worse all the time, and that the recourse at present is the use of UN forces against [Moise] Tshombe.¹⁰

4. Our thoughts on our position and on tactical matters will be sent by separate telegram.

30.X.62 V. KUZNETSOV V. ZORIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard Univer-*

sity.]

Telegram from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and Ambassador to the UN Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 30 October 1962

30 October 1962

We are communicating several thoughts on the situation that has arisen around the Cuban issue, and on our possible position and tactics in the course of future negotiations with U Thant and the Americans.

First. From talks with U Thant, conversations at the UN, and information from the American press, we have received the impression that the strategy of the USA government is at present directed towards the carrying out of our decision to dismantle military sites in Cuba, rejecting at the same time the necessity of giving clear and firm guarantees of Cuban security, restricted in this regard by the statements issued earlier by Kennedy in his messages to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev of 27 and 28 October, or in the last resort by the Security Council's approval of those statements.

In this regard it is significant that the Americans, as is evident from available information, want the future role of the Security Council and especially of U Thant to come down basically to organizing and carrying out inspections on the dismantling of our missile installations in Cuba.

As far as guarantees of Cuban security are concerned, the Americans understand that a clear and concrete resolution of the Security Council could in this respect tie their hands and keep them from proceeding with their aggressive policy toward Cuba, which it seems they do not intend to renounce. On 29 October a UPI press bulletin said that Rusk "had assured the Latin American envoys that any Soviet-American agreement would pursue the goal of the removal of missiles from Cuba, and in no way would exclude the possibility of new collective measures against Castro."

In light of this, there is reason to expect that Kennedy's statement about the USA government's readiness to "give assurances that there will be no invasion of Cuba" will be interpreted by the Americans in the narrow sense, as saying that the USA and the Latin American countries will not attack

Cuba with their own armed forces. At the same time they are trying to keep their hands free not only in relation to the economic blockade of Cuba and subversive operations against it, but also in their support, perhaps somewhat more disguised than earlier, for the preparation by counterrevolutionary Cuban emigres of military activities against Cuba.

Second. As far as U Thant's line is concerned, he intends, as he told us, to exchange views with Fidel Castro primarily on the issue of the verification of the dismantling of Soviet military sites, and also to ascertain that this dismantling is actually going on. On his return he intends to present a report to the Security Council precisely on these issues, after which the Council will face the practical issue of creating a monitoring apparatus.

It is true that U Thant, taking into account how we put before him the issue of guarantees for Cuba, is preparing at the same time to put before Castro the issue of the so-called "UN presence" in Cuba as a guarantee of its security and a guarantee against any Cuban actions against the other Latin-American countries. In the event of the Cuban government's consenting to this sort of "UN presence" in Cuba, U Thant intends to pose the same question about a "UN presence" on the territory of the USA and certain Latin-American countries. It is however evident that the Americans will try to arrange the Security Council affair in such a way as to give priority to the issue of the mechanism for inspections on the war-site dismantling, and not to the issue of guarantees for Cuba. Moreover, U Thant's plans with regard to the guarantees for Cuba are not yet fully clear.

Third. It appears to us that in these conditions it would be expedient, in the interests of safeguarding guarantees for Cuban security, to try to bring together into one knot the main issues that must be resolved for a peaceful settlement of the Cuban crisis, most importantly the issues of control on the dismantling inspections and of guarantees for Cuba, and to reach a simultaneous settlement of these issues through the Security Council. We intend to suggest that such a resolution be given the form of a joint declaration made in the Security Council by the governments of the USSR and the USA (or by these two separately) concerning a peaceful settlement of the Cuban crisis, the

Cuban government's input on this issue, and the Council's resolution approving all these declarations and entrusting the acting Secretary General of the UN, under the supervision of the Security Council, to carry out the necessary measures according to the procedures of the UN apparatus.

We will propose in the framework of these declarations to stipulate, as a guarantee of Cuban security, the final end to all blockade activity against Cuba, and the duties of the USA in the capacity proposed by Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 27 October, and taking into account Fidel Castro's statement of 28 October.

If the Americans insist, we will consider the possibility of approving the explicit mention in the declaration of the Soviet government's obligation to dismantle the Soviet military sites in Cuba which the Americans call offensive, and of the Soviet government's approval of the inspection system that has been worked out.

The Americans will obviously demand a declaration from the Cuban government that contains an expression of consent to the elaborated guarantees of security and of the inspection system, as well as a formulation of Cuba's non-attack obligations with regard to its neighbors, in accordance with the goals of the UN Charter. We will consult with the Cuban delegation on this issue.

As far as the inspection system on the dismantling is concerned, we propose that our primary position should be to agree to the implementation of the inspections after the completion of the dismantling process. If the Americans insist on carrying out inspections during the dismantling process, it might be possible to agree to this as long as we had guarantees for a monitoring procedure that would of course keep hidden from the inspectors anything we did not want to reveal. The monitoring process should take only a short time to be carried out—only a period necessary for ascertaining that the dismantling has been completed.

With regard to the composition of the inspection apparatus, there are now several variants being advanced in UN circles.

According to facts released by the UN secretariat, U Thant wants to create a monitoring apparatus composed of representatives from a selection of neutral countries belonging to the UN—Sweden, Ethiopia, the United Arab Republic, Mexico, Brazil,

[and] Yugoslavia, and also Switzerland. There is also an idea about delegating the monitoring process to eight neutral countries represented in the Committee on Disarmament (India, Burma, the United Arab Republic, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Mexico, Brazil, Sweden), possibly, with the goal of setting a precedent for resolving questions involving inspections on full and general disarmament. The Americans, U Thant has informed us, are putting forth a variant in which the monitoring groups consist of representatives from the USA, the USSR, and Cuba.

We propose that it would be appropriate to stipulate that the monitoring groups include representatives from countries like Indonesia, Ceylon, the United Arab Republic, and Ghana. In the course of negotiations it would be possible to agree on a variant in which the groups are composed of representatives from eight neutral countries belonging to the 18th Committee on Disarmament.

Furthermore a question arises about future UN measures on strengthening peace in the Caribbean region after the completion of the inspections of dismantling, and also on the inspection (by International Red Cross forces) of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba.

In our opinion, it would be possible to agree to the presence in Havana (or in several Cuban commercial ports) of small groups of UN representatives (of the same composition as the groups verifying military-site dismantling) with the right to carry out selective inspections on the vessels of various countries arriving in Cuba, with the purpose of determining whether or not they are carrying so-called "offensive" sorts of armaments. [One could] make this conditional upon the requirement that the same groups of UN representatives be placed in the USA and the Latin-American countries neighboring Cuba with the right to make periodic inspections of certain regions of these countries with the purpose of determining whether preparations are being made for the invasion of Cuba, either by these countries themselves or by Cuban emigres.

It would be possible to propose that this system of observation operate for the duration, for example, of one year, after which the Security Council would again examine the issue of whether a continuation of the observation is needed.

Fourth. Taking into account President Kennedy's desire, communicated through Robert Kennedy in his conversation with Comrade Dobrynin on 27 October (your #1255), we will not raise the issue of the American bases in Turkey in our negotiations with U Thant and the Americans in New York. At the same time it seems to us possible and expedient to reach an agreement with the USA that in the joint Soviet-American declaration in the Security Council, there be a record of both sides' intention to enter in the near future negotiations for normalizing relations between the NATO countries and the countries of the Warsaw Pact, as has already been outlined in the correspondence between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and President Kennedy. In doing so it might be possible to include in such a declaration a reference both to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message of 28 October and Kennedy's messages of 27 and 28 October, as well as to Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's message of 27 October, in which the question about Turkey is raised.

Fifth. Until now, in our official documents and during negotiations here in New York, our weaponry now being dismantled in Cuba has been referred to as "weaponry considered offensive by the Americans." In the course of future negotiations, and especially during the preparation of the texts of the Security Council documents, we will have to oppose our own concrete formulation to the American formulation "offensive weaponry." It might be possible in our opinion to use, say, the formula "means for conveying nuclear arms at an operational distance a certain number of kilometers."

All the issues laid out here will be the subject of discussions immediately after U Thant's return from Cuba, i.e., after 1 November.

We request your examination.

30.X.62 V. KUZNETSOV
V. ZORIN

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to

**the USA A.F. Dobrynin to the USSR
Foreign Ministry, 30 October 1962**

30 October 1962

Today Robert Kennedy invited me to meet with him. He said that he would like to talk about N.S. Khrushchev's letter to the President yesterday.¹¹

The President, Robert Kennedy said, confirms the understanding [*dogovorionost*] with N.S. Khrushchev on the elimination of the American missile bases in Turkey (Robert Kennedy confirmed that one speaks of an understanding). Corresponding measures will be taken towards fulfilling this understanding within the period of time indicated earlier, in confidential observance of NATO guidelines, but of course without any mention that this is connected to the Cuban events.

We, however, said Robert Kennedy, are not prepared to formulate such an understanding in the form of letters, even the most confidential letters, between the President and the head of the Soviet government when it concerns such a highly delicate issue. Speaking in all candor, I myself, for example, do not want to risk getting involved in the transmission of this sort of letter, since who knows where and when such letters can surface or be somehow published—not now, but in the future—and any changes in the course of events are possible. The appearance of such a document could cause irreparable harm to my political career in the future. This is why we request that you take this letter back.

It is possible, Robert Kennedy continued, that you do not believe us and through letters you want to put the understanding in writing. The issue of Soviet missile bases in Cuba has unfortunately introduced a real element of uncertainty and suspicion even into confidential channels of contact. We will however live up to our promise, even if it is given in this oral form. As you know, it was in precisely the same oral form that the President made his promise to N.S. Khrushchev regarding the removal of a certain number of American soldiers from Thailand.¹² That promise was kept. So too will this promise be kept.

As a guarantee, Robert Kennedy added, I can only give you my word. Moreover I can tell you that two other people besides the President know about the exist-

ing understanding: they are [Secretary of State Dean] Rusk and [advisor on Soviet affairs Llewellyn] Thompson. If you do not believe me, discuss it with them, and they will tell you the same thing. But it is better not to transfer this understanding into a formal, albeit confidential, exchange of letters (as can be noted, the greatest suspicion in the two Kennedy brothers was elicited by the part of Khrushchev's letter which speaks directly of a link between the Cuban events and the bases in Turkey). We hope that N.S. Khrushchev will understand us correctly. In regard to this Robert Kennedy insistently asked to take the letter back without delay.

I told Robert Kennedy that everything said above I would report to N.S. Khrushchev, emphasizing in doing so that even the President and he, Robert Kennedy, could be sure of the fact that the Soviet government is regarding the understanding that has been reached as strictly secret and not for publication. At the same time, in order to confirm Robert Kennedy's statement about the understanding, I asked him again about whether the President really confirms the understanding with N.S. Khrushchev on the elimination of American missile bases in Turkey. Robert Kennedy said once again that he confirmed it, and again that he hoped that their motivations would be properly understood in Moscow. Taking what they explained into account, I believed it conditionally possible—before receiving any instructions from Moscow—to take this letter [back], since a categorical refusal to do so would, in my opinion, only weaken Robert Kennedy's firm statements on the understanding that has been reached. Moreover, leaving the letter with him, after he had clearly expressed the President's desire not to exchange letters, could scarcely be in the interests of doing business [in the future].

In conclusion Robert Kennedy said that, in his opinion, the events connected with the Cuban issue have been developing quite favorably, and that he hoped that everything would eventually be settled. He added that, on the Turkish issue and other highly confidential issues he was prepared to maintain a direct contact with me as earlier, emphasizing in doing so that the point was the the possible oral considerations of the President and the head of the Soviet government N.S. Khrushchev on the exchange of letters on such delicate issues as missile bases in Turkey, or issues which need to be

handled more by the State Department than by him personally, taking into account the delicacy of his situation as the President's brother and as Attorney General of the United States. I do not want, Robert Kennedy added, to claim for myself the function of the State Department, but my "solitary diplomacy" may be needed several more times, and we will meeting with each other periodically.

I answered to Robert Kennedy that I was prepared to maintain contact with him on highly important issues in the future, passing over the heads, as he himself suggested, of all intermediaries. Robert Kennedy confirmed this. From what Robert Kennedy said it was clear that the President is trying now to avoid exchanging any documents on issues of a highly delicate nature like Turkey which could leave a trace anywhere, but that he favors the continuation of a confidential exchange of opinions between the heads of the two governments.

We believe it expedient to visit Robert Kennedy once again and to issue a statement, in referring to our mission, that the Soviet government and N.S. Khrushchev personally are prepared to take into account the President's desire for maintaining the secrecy of the oral understanding on the removal of the American missile bases from Turkey. It is also expedient to tell of our willingness, if the President is also prepared for this, to continue the confidential exchange of opinions between the heads of the governments on many important unresolved issues, on whose resolution the lessening of international tension, and of the tension between our two countries in particular, is to a very great degree dependent.

I request instructions.

30.X.62 A.DOBRYNIN

[Source: *Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.*]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Ministry to Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V.V. Kuznetsov, New York, 31 October 1962

In the negotiations between the del-

legates of the USSR, the USA, and Cuba with the participation of the acting Secretary General of the UN on the normalization of the situation that has arisen around Cuba, you should follow the messages of N.S. Khrushchev to President John Kennedy and U Thant, and also by the instructions given in our dispatches #1254 and #1267.

In the negotiations you should try to record the agreement deriving from the exchange of messages between N.S. Khrushchev and John Kennedy in the form of a protocol statement that would be presented to the Security Council for all measures taken in accordance with the UN Charter. As a basis for negotiations, after receiving the consent of our Cuban friends, convey to the Americans and to U Thant the statement of protocol, and declare that this statement is being introduced jointly by the governments of the USSR and Cuba. (The text of the statement of protocol is being communicated by separate telegram.)

Since Fidel Castro's statement of 28 October contains a demand concerning the evacuation of the USA naval base in Guantanamo, the protocol statement includes a point concerning the negotiations of the USA and the Republic of Cuba on this matter. If however the USA objects to the inclusion of this point, and this impedes the reaching of an agreement according to the whole protocol statement, then with the consent of the Cuban representative you may not insist on a separate mention of the Guantanamo base in the protocol statement. In this we proceed from the fact that the protocol statement contains Article 16, which stipulates the necessity of carrying out negotiations on other issues, including issues raised in Fidel Castro's statement of 28 October, i.e. in other words, the issue of the military base in Guantanamo.

As far as a possible Security Council resolution with regard to the protocol statement is concerned, in negotiations you should aim for the Council's approving a resolution that would generally contain the following basic points:

"1. The Security Council welcomes with satisfaction and expresses its approval of the agreement reached by the governments of the USSR, the USA, and Cuba with the participation of the acting Secretary General of the UN U Thant, on measures to be taken for normalizing the Caribbean situation, which facilitates the lessening of the

tension that had had arisen in the relations among the countries.

2. The Security Council takes into consideration the obligations of the governments of the USSR, the USA, and the Republic of Cuba recorded in the protocol presented to the Security Council, including precisely:

(Here the text of all 17 articles of the protocol statement is given.)

3. The Security Council is proceeding from the stipulation that the governments of the countries participating in the protocol statement will strictly carry out the obligations they have taken on, which will contribute to the strengthening of trust among the countries and to affirming peace generally.

4. In accordance with articles 10 and 13 of the protocol statement, the Security Council requests the governments of [gap in text] countries to share their own delegates as agents for ascertaining the carrying out of the obligations to dismantle and remove the weaponry indicated in articles 9 and 12 of the protocol statement.

5. The Security Council asks acting UN Secretary General U Thant to grant the group of agents the necessary means and cooperation for carrying out the functions with which they have been entrusted."

The text of the protocol statement is now being submitted to the approval of Fidel Castro.

On receiving the approval of Fidel Castro, we will notify you of the possibility of forwarding this text to the Americans and U Thant on behalf of the Soviet Union and Cuba.

If you have any thoughts pertaining to the local situation, communicate them.

Confirm reception of this telegram.

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to USSR Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev, 31 October 1962

You should visit F. Castro and, after reference to these instructions, tell him the

following.

Currently there is a lessening in military tension created around Cuba. But on the diplomatic field we have to accomplish a crucial stage in order to consolidate the achieved success and to bind the Americans by commitments ensuing from the exchange of messages between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy and F. Castro's statement of 28 October.

We consider that under current conditions we and you should display self-restraint in our official declarations and statements and also in the press, in order to not to give the aggressors a pretext to blame our side for irreconcilability and intractability. We must hold to a firm, but constructive stand. We would like it to be taken into account in your statements, too. It would be good if you in your appearances underline Cuba's readiness to normalize diplomatic and economic relations with the USA and countries of Latin America. It should also be repeated what you have declared more than once about Cuba's devotion to the cause of peace, to the UN principles, among them non-interference of states into the internal affairs of each other.

All of this is needed, of course, not for the aggressors' ears, but for international public opinion.

Telegraph the implementation of these instructions.

31.X.62

A. GROMYKO

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to USSR Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev, 31 October 1962

Visit Fidel Castro and tell him the following:

1. Say, that in Moscow we consider it necessary to satisfy U Thant's desire that the launchers, which are being dismantled, be shown to him and persons accompanying him, among them General Rikhye, even in the course of dismantling. It is advantageous for us, especially taking into account

that U Thant has promised to make a statement immediately on his return to the USA, that the Soviet Union had fulfilled its commitments.

Inform [Castro] also about our consent to permit U Thant's representatives, if he raises such a question, to be allowed to visit sites of dismantling even after U Thant's departure from Cuba, in order to check that the dismantling has been carried out and to be sure about the launchers' withdrawal from Cuba.

Immediately inform about these instructions Pavlov [Pliyev], who has to fulfill them without delay.

2. Inform Fidel Castro that in Moscow it is considered advantageous U Thant's proposal about creating UN posts on the territory of Cuba, corresponding countries of Latin America, and in the USA territory in order to observe compliance with the commitments; this proposal corresponds to both the interests of Cuba and our common interests. Implementation of this proposal for a "UN presence," made by U Thant, would mean that the UN equally regard Cuba and the USA on this issue. That is advantageous for the party which does not intend to attack, i.e. for Cuba, and it is not advantageous for the party with aggressive intentions, i.e. for the USA and their assistants from the Latin American countries.

Immediately inform Pavlov [Pliyev] about these instructions too.

Express confidence that Fidel Castro and his friends would also accept U Thant's proposal, which is very important for us.

We proceed from the assumption that the Cuban government and comrade Pavlov [Pliyev] would undertake all the necessary measures on site.

Cable report on the execution of these instructions.

A. GROMYKO

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

Telegram from Soviet ambassador to Cuba A. I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 31 October 1962

31 October

After we learned that the Cubans will not permit U Thant and his advisors to visit the dismantling of military sites, and honoring Rikhye's request to meet with the Soviet general, Comrade Pavlov [Pliyev] and I made the decision to engage U Thant in talks with myself and General [Igor D.] Statsenko,¹³ who would offer him and Rikhye detailed information on the issues raised by them yesterday.

Preliminary to our decision to visit U Thant, I informed President Dorticos, who supported this step.

In our talks with U Thant and Rikhye we provided the following information:

The dismantling of the weaponry was begun on the evening of 28 October, and in a general way has practically already been completed by today. By the end of 1 November or at the latest 2 November all weaponry will have been sent to ports for loading onto ships. The arrival times of the ships may be known only by Moscow, and we requested that the answer to U Thant on this issue be sent to New York.

U Thant and Rikhye expressed thanks for the information, saying that for them it was the chief result of the trip to Cuba, and probably the most significant one after Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's letter of 28 October.

U Thant asked General Statsenko whether he could refer to the latter in his report and mention his family name.

We gave a positive response, saying that Comrade Statsenko had been entrusted with the dismantling of the weaponry, and he answered these questions responsibly.

U Thant said nothing about his talks with Fidel Castro. Your instructions were received after the talks with U Thant.

31.X.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 31 October 1962

Met Fidel Castro and gave to him letter from N.S. Khrushchev.¹⁴

Castro read it attentively and, while doing so, made two remarks.

1. There are not [merely] some Cuban comrades who do not understand the decision regarding the removal of the special weapons, but the whole Cuban people.

2. Apparently, N.S. Khrushchev did not understand me or the translation was not correct since in the cable of 27 [26?] October I did not suggest to be the first in delivering a blow against the adversary territory during the crisis, but in the case if there were an aggression against Cuba and Soviet people would be perishing together with the Cubans.¹⁵

I told Castro that the translation had been made correctly and, I suppose, the sense of his cable had been understood correctly in Moscow since it was clearly said there about the condition of an aggression against Cuba, but even in this case it is hardly possible to approach merely mechanically such an important issue and to use nuclear arms without looking for other means.

Castro didn't make any additional comment on the letter and said that it was necessary to read it once more and to think.

Today Castro was more composed and said that Da'Cunha, a Brazilian general, had come to see him with a personal message from [Brazilian President Joao] Goulart and suggested the good offices of Brazil in settling the conflict with the USA upon receiving from them non-aggression guarantees. Da'Cunha said that Brazil would not break relations with Cuba and would continue to trade.

He suggested to begin gradual disarmament upon receiving guarantees and to come forward with a statement about Cuba's non-interference into affairs of the Latin American countries.

Castro said that such an approach is the most correct one and therefore the Cubans had told Da'Cunha that they had been accepting such a mediation and were ready for the suggested measures under the condition that the USA accept the 5 points of the Cuban statement including that of eliminating the Guantanamo base. Castro asked what have we spoken about with U Thant and himself informed [me] about their conversation, what has already been recounted to me by Dorticos.

31/X/62 ALEKSEEV

1 November 1962

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

Telegram from Soviet Foreign Ministry to A.A. Soboleva and A.F. Dobrynin at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, 31 October 1962

31 October 1962

1. On 28 October the Ministry sent to the USA embassy a note of protest from the Soviet government to the American government concerning the flights around the Soviet ship "Simferopol" by American planes on 24 October of this year, and also concerning the cannon-fire during these flights.

On 31 October the embassy in a response note declares that no artillery shots at the "Simferopol" or near it had been carried out, and that the command of the "Simferopol" could have mistaken for gunfire the use by the plane's pilot of several magnetic photo-illuminating cartridges.

2. On 30 October the embassy sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a note of protest concerning the "obvious inability or refusal of the Soviet powers responsible for upholding the social order to take measures in recent days to defend the personnel and the property of the embassy."¹⁶

The embassy raises the issue of the repair of or compensation for damages incurred by embassy property and personnel, and also "expects appropriate measures to be taken for averting a repetition of such cases." This has been conveyed for informational purposes.

[Source: Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVP RF), Moscow; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V.V. Kuznetsov to USSR Foreign Ministry, 1 November 1962

On 31 October U Thant, after his return from Cuba, informed us of the results of his trip.

1. According to U Thant, his main task was to ask whether Fidel Castro would give his consent to the establishment in Cuba of UN groups monitoring the dismantling of Soviet military installations. Castro's response was negative. Castro said that Cuba was a sovereign, independent state, and that if it allowed UN monitoring on its territory, it would be a humiliation for the Republic. If the Soviet government gives its consent to the monitoring, then such monitoring should be carried out outside the borders of Cuba's territorial waters.

2. U Thant then asked Castro whether he could leave his own representatives behind in Havana for contact with the Cuban government. Castro said that it would be better to maintain such contact in New York through the new Cuban delegate to the UN, C[arlos]. Lechuga (who arrived from Cuba with U Thant) and through the minister of foreign affairs, Roa, who would soon arrive in New York.

3. U Thant met in Cuba with the Soviet ambassador and a Soviet general, who informed him that the dismantling of military installations had begun on 28 October and would be finished by 1 or 2 November.

On his return to New York, U Thant informed Stevenson of the dismantling, and appealed to him to cease the "quarantine," for which there seems, even from the American point of view, to be no need. Prolonging the "quarantine" will put the Cuban people in a difficult situation.

4. U Thant addressed a request to Castro to return to the USA the pilot of the U-2 airplane that had been shot down over Cuba, if that pilot was still alive. Castro said that the pilot was dead, but that he would send his body back to the USA, if the UN would take care of the transportation matters. Castro also said that the Cuban government would be continuing to act as it had been up to this point with regard to American planes violating the air space of Cuba. U Thant has communicated this to Stevenson.

5. U Thant asked Castro what he imagined the future role of the UN to be in the Cuban affair. Castro answered that the Cu-

ban government would carry on negotiations within the framework of the UN only on the basis of the five principles laid out in Castro's statement of 28 October, and on no other basis. U Thant has communicated this to Stevenson.

Stevenson told U Thant that he would pass all this on to President Kennedy today.

6. We asked U Thant what further steps he intended to take. U Thant said that on the next day, 1 November, he would inform the members of the Security Council, each one separately, of the results of his visit to Cuba, but that he was not prepared to call a meeting of the Council before 6 November (the day on which the national elections will be held in the USA).

U Thant said as well that he considered it expedient to begin the next day to work out the details of the monitoring of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba by representatives of the International Red Cross. He asked to select a representative from among ourselves. In response to our question as to how U Thant envisaged, after his visit to Cuba, the monitoring of these vessels, he said that such monitoring would have to be carried out not in Cuban ports, but on the open sea.

1.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: AVP RF, Moscow; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA A. Dobrynin to USSR Foreign Ministry, forwarding telegram from G. A. Zhukov, 1 November 1962

We relay a telegram from Comrade Zhukov:

"On 31 October I met successively with [White House spokesman Pierre] Salinger, Thompson, [Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs and Averell] Harriman, and Lippmann. The welcome was decidedly cordial, and all communicated their warm greetings to N.S. Khrushchev, and expressed gratitude for his wise actions that have opened up the way toward a settlement of the Cuban problem.

At the same time all the participants

emphasized the necessity of confirming as quickly as possible, by way of inspection through any means (through the Red Cross, neutral observers, or aerial photos), that the Soviet bases are being dismantled and the missiles are being removed. They referred to the growing campaign of right-wing figures who assert that “Kennedy has once again become the victim of Soviet deception.” This is especially dangerous for Kennedy on the eve of the national elections. For this reason it is extremely urgent for him to receive any available evidence that the agreement with N.S. Khrushchev has been carried out.

All participants said that settling the Cuban crisis would open the way to resolutions of other emerging problems: a prohibition on nuclear testing, an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, an agreement between NATO and the Warsaw Pact members on a series of issues, and so on.

They still consider the prospect of a meeting between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy to be a distant one, but they assert that it will become a necessity when the Cuban problem is settled, and when appropriate preparations are made on the level of the staff for guaranteeing that constructive decisions will be made.

I will relay details from New York.
Zhukov.”

1.XI.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Soviet ambassador to the USA A. F. Dobrynin to Soviet Foreign Ministry, 1 November 1962

1 November 1962

At one of the receptions I had a conversation with W. Lippmann. He confirmed, half in jest, that he “caught it hot” for having published [in a column published on 25 October—ed.], in the middle of the Cuban crisis, an article about the possibility of exchanging Soviet missile bases in Cuba for American missile bases in Turkey, insofar as “a lot of people” here considered that his

article had suggested to N.S. Khrushchev the idea of raising such a question. Lippmann said that he had been writing the article taking into consideration data which had previously received from high-ranking officers of the U.S. Agency for disarmament.¹⁷ Several officers of this Agency believe that the question of bases has become rather obsolete and it must be solved.

Lippmann himself proceeds from the assumption that the issues of American bases in Turkey and Italy can be solved in the relatively near future. There is a certain progress of mood regarding this issue in Washington. Nevertheless, by no means can it be related to the Cuban events. For a number of reasons, Kennedy’s administration can’t do that. A corresponding decision can be formalized as one of the first, partial actions in the framework of disarmament, but necessarily waiting for a final agreement upon a plan of general and complete disarmament.

Lippmann also said that during the Cuban crisis Thompson played a certain positive deterrent role at the White House. But in general in the course of the last year, according to Lippmann, Thompson has considerably evolved and become closer to [Soviet expert Charles] Bohlen’s point of view, i.e., there is no hope of reaching an agreement with the Soviet Union on principal issues due to its extreme obstinacy. With such a pessimistic mood Thompson has returned from the Soviet Union.

Lippmann confirmed that during the Cuban conflict the USA had been very close to war. Even dates for the bombing of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba had been planned — October 29 or 30, but N.S. Khrushchev’s response of October 28 to Kennedy’s “great relief” drastically altered the subsequent course of events.

01/XI/62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister A. Gromyko to Deputy Foreign Minister V.V. Kuznetsov at the Soviet Mission in New York, 1 November 1962

1 November 1962

It is necessary that you meet with [U.S. negotiator John J.] McCloy. Inform him that you have delivered a report on the content of the conversation with him, as well as on the statement that the government of the USA, in an expression of its goodwill, has agreed that there be no monitoring of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba until the International Red Cross is involved in such monitoring. In response to this, you have been instructed by Moscow to inform McCloy that our view of this goodwill gesture is a sympathetic one. It will allow the speedy arrival of Soviet ships into Cuban ports, and will facilitate the removal of the dismantled installations from Cuba.

The question of whether to allow observers onto Cuban territory is, of course, an issue that must be decided by Cuba, in its capacity as a sovereign state. The Cubans, and only the Cubans, can make decisions on questions of that sort.

We would like, however, to reach an agreement with the Americans that will keep this whole affair under control.

In the next few days, until 7 or 8 or at the very latest 10 November, we intend to load the dismantled materials onto ships and remove them from Cuba. We have no objections to disclosing photographs of the dismantled and disabled launch pads, as well as of the loaded missiles, which the President and the government of the USA have called offensive weaponry.

We also would have no objections to your ships being shown, at close distance, the missiles loaded on the Soviet ships. But we think that there will scarcely be any doubts in your minds as to the certainty that, once we have announced the dismantling of the military installations and the removal of the missiles, we will carry out these actions within the period indicated by us.

I have been entrusted with the task of emphasizing that the Soviet party is trying to settle this whole issue quickly on the basis of compromise, mutual concessions, and on the conditions put forth in statements by the Chair of the Council of Ministers of the USSR [Khrushchev] and by the President of the USA.

As far as the flights by American planes over Cuban territory are concerned, the Cubans’ categorical objections are fully understood and are believed to be justifiable, since such flights represent a blatant

violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Cuba. The Americans should take into account that such actions affect the national feelings of the Cuban people, which can only complicate the settlement of the difficult issues before us. The Americans would have acted reasonably if they had already ceased this sort of flight, as they should have done given that the condition expressed in the above-mentioned statements stipulating the dismantling of missile installations has been fulfilled, and given that the dismantled materials are being brought together for loading onto ships.

In conclusion, tell McCloy that we expect the Americans to lift the quarantine immediately and completely.

AG

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA A. Dobrynin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 1 November 1962

[first page of two-page document is missing from copy obtained by CWIHP—ed.]

[...Dobrynin] expressed the hope, in accordance with the letter sent by N.S. Khrushchev, that the USA would renounce the quarantine without waiting for the introduction of a supplementary procedure for inspecting ships, and so on.

Robert Kennedy has said that this issue does not represent any difficulties. The important thing for us now (he implied that he was talking about public opinion, rather than the thoughts of the President himself), is to have some confirmation, from the UN for example, that the Soviet bases are being dismantled, and that the corresponding missile weaponry is being removed.

We and the USA government have essentially two possible courses of actions in this matter: first, to carry out reconnaissance flights over Cuba. But this entails the danger that the Cubans (he emphasized the Cubans, and not the Russians) may shoot down an American plane, and thus a possible new and highly undesirable chain reaction of events in the Cuban affair would

be unleashed.

The second course of action is to get from the UN some information on the dismantling of the bases. The government of the USA could then be satisfied with this as a prerequisite for lifting the quarantine. Robert Kennedy emphasized that he was not yet prepared to talk about the details of this whole affair, since the President did not yet have any information on the results of U Thant's trip. Within an hour, said Robert Kennedy, a government meeting would take place in which this issue would be examined. He promised in the event of an emergency to get in touch with me directly, or, if this occurs during my trip to New York to meet with [CPSU CC Politburo member] A.I. Mikoyan, through Stevenson and Kuznetsov.

Robert Kennedy emphasized that the point was not that they do not trust our information on this account, but rather the question of how to present this whole affair to the public opinion of the USA in connection with the earlier statements offered by the President. It was felt that he had been somewhat worried by how Fidel Castro might hinder the carrying out of the agreement that had been reached.

1.XI.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister A. Gromyko to Soviet Ambassador in Havana, with a copy sent to Kuznetsov in New York, 1 November 1962

1 November 1962

The date for the removal of the dismantled special materials from Cuba has been set for 7 or 8 November, but not later than 10 November. This has become possible as a result of the fact that the necessity of observing strict secrecy in the transfer of the special materials has fallen away. For the removal of these materials it is now possible and advisable to use our usual ships located in Cuban ports or arriving there in the coming days, and there is no need to hide such materials in the ship holds.

It is necessary that you and Comrade Pavlov [Pliyev] be guided by this information. Similar instructions to Comrade Pavlov are being given though the Ministry of Defense.

Confirm reception of this telegram.

A.G.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister A. A. Gromyko to the Soviet Mission in New York, 1 November 1962

To the SOVIET MISSION—COMRADES KUZNETSOV, ZORIN

First. Judging by your reports [several words deleted—ed.], the USA and several other states belonging to the Security Council may try to complicate the negotiations underway now in New York among the representatives of the USSR, Cuba, and the USA, by submitting all the issues being discussed in the course of the negotiations to the consideration of the Security Council. This is visible in the proposal by the Irish delegate, Boland, that the Security Council hear U Thant's report and pass a resolution for delegating to U Thant the task of creating a special UN mechanism for monitoring the dismantling of the special installations in Cuba. Besides this, his proposal also stipulates that the other issues of the "Cuban settlement" may also be discussed in the Security Council, although the decision on it may be postponed somewhat. All this means that the USA, along with other countries that support its policy, wants to take all these issues into its own hands in order to drag out the resolution of the issues concerning the security guarantees for Cuba, as well as the securing, by way of agreements, of the USA duties that have emerged from the exchange of messages between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy.

You should firmly object to such an attempt to replace the trilateral negotiations, in which U Thant is participating, with a submission of all the issues to the consideration of the Security Council, in which it would be impossible, given its present composition, to reach resolutions that are advan-

tageous for us. Make a statement about this in categorical form to U Thant, Stevenson, as well as to the UN delegates of the other nations that will deal with this issue along with you. Insist on the necessity of prolonging the trilateral negotiations with U Thant's participation, and on their speedy completion by securing the results of the negotiations in a corresponding written agreement (a protocol statement).

Second. 1. On the monitoring of the dismantling and the removal of the special installations. Concerning the issue of monitoring the performance of work towards dismantling the special installations in Cuba, you should operate on the assumption that the dismantling process will be completed by 2 November, and that the dismantled materials will be removed from Cuba by 7 or 8 November, or at the very latest 10 November, if our ships arrive without hindrance in Cuban ports.

2. On the composition of the group of Security Council agents. Proceed on the assumption that for us it is acceptable that the group monitoring the fulfillment of duties to dismantle and remove the special missile installations from Cuba contain representatives from the neutral states proposed by U Thant (Sweden, Ethiopia, the United Arab Republic, Mexico, Brazil, Yugoslavia, Switzerland). Also you may not object to the proposal that this group consist of eight representatives of the neutral nations belonging to the Disarmament Committee (India, Burma, the United Arab Republic, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Mexico, Brazil, Sweden), if such a proposal is introduced. There are also no objections to including in the group the representatives of Indonesia, Ceylon, the United Arab Republic, and Ghana, as you propose.

We consider unacceptable the Americans' proposal for the creation of monitoring groups composed of the USA, the USSR, and Cuba.

3. On the monitoring of vessels bound for Cuba, after the lifting of the blockade. You should proceed from the fact that we have given our consent to the monitoring of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba by the International Red Cross. It is envisaged that this monitoring will be carried out until the end of the so-called "quarantine." From this it follows that the monitoring will be short-term. Your proposal that the system for monitoring the vessels be operative for the

duration, for example, of a year, is not appropriate.

4. On UN posts. In connection with the issue you proposed of monitoring certain regions of the USA and several Latin American countries with the goal of determining whether preparations for the invasion of Cuba are underway, follow the instructions in which we expressed our positive view of U Thant's proposal concerning the "UN presence" in these countries and in Cuba.

You may approve the proposal that the composition of the UN posts for carrying out the indicated functions be similar to the composition of the groups of agents for monitoring the dismantling and removal of special missile materials from the territory of Cuba.

5. On American bases in Turkey. We agree with your opinion. You should not in any circumstance touch on this issue in your negotiations with U Thant and the USA representatives in New York, since it is the subject of direct negotiations between Moscow and Washington. On this point we are keeping you informed only for your personal edification.

6. On the concept of "offensive weaponry." We consider it inexpedient to change the formula that was used in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's messages and in the protocol draft communicated by you, namely: "weaponry which the USA government has called offensive."

Your proposal to call this weaponry "means for launching nuclear arms at an operational distance greater than (so many) kilometers" could allow the discussion of this issue to acquire an undesirable character for us, since the Americans will naturally be trying to broaden the scope of the weaponry prohibited from installations in Cuba.

Third. Concerning all the main issues relevant to the duties of the parties—the USA, the USSR, and Cuba—and the securing of their corresponding pledges, follow the text of the protocol statement and the instructions contained in our memorandum. Bear in mind, however, that as we have already informed you, you will be carrying out these instructions, as well as the instructions contained in the "second" point of the present telegram, only on receiving reports from us that our Cuban friends have agreed to these proposals.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

**Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister
Gromyko to Soviet Mission in New
York, for A. I. Mikoyan,
1 November 1962**

1 November 1962

Comrade N.S. Khrushchev has entrusted me with the task of relaying the following to you:

1. We have specified here that our installations now being dismantled can be shipped out of Cuba by 7 or 8 or at the latest 10 November. This must be your point of departure in your talks with U Thant, McCloy, and our Cuban friends. Of course this is only on the condition that our ships will be granted safe passage into Cuban ports.

2. In the talks with Fidel Castro, depending on how these talks unfold, you should make use of the following points in your argumentation:

Emphasize that it is the necessity of a speedy lifting of the so-called quarantine that, in our opinion, our Cuban friends are most interested in. They know better than anyone else whether Cuba needs the shipments of goods presently on Soviet ships on the open sea. These cargoes cannot remain on the open sea for long. Among them are perishable cargoes. Moreover, it must be taken into account that there is also an economic aspect to this issue: we are suffering great expenses because the vessels are being detained on their courses. A further detainment will only increase these financial losses. Cuba is not concealing these losses from us. Of course it may be that Cuba is ready to bear the burden of these doubled expenses, in which case it is a different story. We see that you and we have different approaches to how this issue must be resolved.

If our Cuban friends are for some reason not willing to facilitate the resolution of this issue, we will be placed in a situation in which we will have to recall the ships. For at present we are suffering unjustified expenses.

It is impossible not to take into account the damages being inflicted on our prestige

A.G.

because of the present situation in which our vessels remain immobilized on the open sea. This cannot continue endlessly.

We believe that the missiles have achieved their effect, and achieved it well. You say that you do not believe the Americans. We too do not believe them. But we are operating on the assumption that the socialist states should take the necessary steps to ensure their security, and to coexist with the USA. It is possible that I am simply repeating here what I was saying to you before your trip, but I think that these concerns should be borne in mind when you are presenting our case to Castro. This does not mean, of course, that they should be expressed literally and explicitly. But you must make him clearly understand that we are worried by the unreasonable position that our Cuban comrades have been forced to take.

1.XI.62 A. GROMYKO

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable of V.V. Kuznetsov on 1 November 1962 Conversation between CPSU CC Politburo Member A.I. Mikoyan and Acting UN Secretary General U Thant, 2 November 1962

Ciphered telegram

Top Secret
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2 November 1962

CC CPSU

Transmitting the record of conversation of com. A.I. Mikoyan

The conversation took place with U Thant on 1 November 1962 in the U.N. mission [of the USSR - trans.].

At the start com. Mikoyan passed to U Thant regard from com. N.S. Khrushchev as well as on his own behalf. He told U Thant that N.S. Khrushchev recalls with warmth the conversations that he had with the acting Secretary General. Personally N.S. Khrushchev and his colleagues believe that

U Thant took a good initiative with the aim of resolving the Cuban crisis and that in this regard we are acknowledging his large contribution. This raises the authority of U Thant himself as well as of the United Nations that could express itself in such a dangerous situation.

He remarked then that although the immediate danger of war has ebbed, nevertheless there are political and diplomatic difficulties and they should be resolved according to the ideas and proposals advanced in the letters of N.S. Khrushchev [and] Kennedy and in the declaration of Castro. He stressed that for its part the Soviet Union was ready to continue its efforts to achieve final resolution of the Cuban issue. He remarked that the acting Secretary General could exercise a certain influence, using his authority, in the process of ultimate settlement of the conflict.

He informed that he was heading for Cuba to meet with the Cuban friends, and decided to stop in New York in order to see U Thant and hear his considerations with regard to his recent trip to Cuba.

U Thant welcomed com. Mikoyan. He reminded him of their meetings in Yalta in November 1955 when U Thant accompanied [Burmese leader] U Nu, and then in Burma. U Thant recalled with warmth his meetings with N.S. Khrushchev in 1955 in Yalta as well as during the trip of N.S. Khrushchev to Burma, and also in the United Nations in 1960 and again this year in the Soviet Union. U Thant expressed his sincere gratitude to N.S. Khrushchev for his encouraging words passed to him in his letters to U Thant and also through our representatives in the UN. He values highly and rejoices at the assessment that the Soviet Union gives to his efforts in the resolution of the Cuban issue.

U Thant stressed that the position of the Soviet government and its head N.S. Khrushchev in the Cuban crisis was gratefully received by the vast majority of the peoples of all the world and met with gratitude by the whole mankind. He remarked that the people now see much more clearly the sincere desire of the Soviet Union to have the UN as an efficacious instrument for maintaining peace and for preventing war.

After that U Thant turned to his trip to Cuba and said the following.

The trip was taken in connection with

the exchange of letters between him and Fidel Castro. In his first appeal to Castro, U Thant called on him to cooperate with the UN in the name of securing peace. In his reply, Castro invited U Thant to visit Cuba personally in his capacity of acting UN Secretary General and to discuss with him the issues concerning the attitude of the government of Cuba on the question under consideration of the Security Council.

U Thant accepted this invitation and visited Cuba, staying there on 30 and 31 October. He held two meetings with Prime Minister Castro, when the Cuban issue was discussed. In Havana he met some diplomats accredited by the government of Castro. The most useful conversations were ones with the Ambassadors of Brazil, Yugoslavia, the UAR [United Arab Republic], and the USSR.

One of the issues on U Thant's agenda during the trip was to clarify the reaction of the Cuban government concerning the agreement of the Soviet Union to allow U.N. observers to check on the fulfillment of the commitment to dismantle Soviet missile launchers in Cuba and to return them to the USSR.

Castro said in categorical form that Cuba is a sovereign and independent state and it would not allow any external organization - be it the UN or anything else - to interfere in the internal affairs of Cuba. Imposition of inspection on the part of the UN would be considered by the Cuban people as an infringement on its sovereign rights and would be considered as a humiliation of the people of Cuba. Such a step cannot be accepted by the Cuban government. If the USSR wants to meet the announced goals of sending the groups of inspectors, then Castro believes that such inspections might be carried out outside of the territorial waters of Cuba.

Castro informed U Thant that on Thursday, 1 November, he was going to speak on radio and television with a speech where he intends to mention this issue. U Thant reportedly advised Castro to postpone this speech, since it is very delicate and would be assessed as a declaration of policy with all consequences that flow out of it. Castro responded to U Thant that he had already put off making of this speech with regard to [U Thant's] visit in Cuba. If the speech were delayed one more time, then people would not understand it. Therefore Castro could not

once again postpone his speech.

The U Thant asked Castro not to mention in his speech the position of the government of Cuba regarding the [issue of] UN inspection, to which he gladly agreed, saying that he would remove this paragraph from the text he had already prepared.

U Thant asked com. Mikoyan, having in mind the confidential character of his conversations with Castro, not to raise this issue on his own initiative.

As Castro pointed out, in his speech he planned to lay out the entire foreign policy of Cuba and in particular to emphasize the five points on the settlement of the Cuban crisis he had advanced on 28 October. To this U Thant responded that in view of the deliberations on the Cuban issue in the Security Council and his own speech he could not do it. The Security Council did not authorize him to discuss with the sides issues of permanent or long-term character of settlement of the conflict in the Caribbean sea.

To this Castro responded that a temporary resolution of immediate problems did not resolve the Cuban issue as a whole. The resolution of these immediate questions, in the opinion of the government of Cuba, had to be linked to resolution of the longer-term problems. The Security Council had to discuss also and resolve the issue about a lasting peace in the area of the Caribbean sea. If the Security Council were preoccupied with resolution of only immediate problems, then similar problems would emerge in the foreseeable future again, and they could create a situation similar to the current one. Therefore the government of Cuba is convinced that to ensure lasting and secure peace in the whole world it is necessary that the Security Council should preoccupy itself with the issue of ensuring lasting peace in the Caribbean region. In case the Security Council would be convened, Castro intends to send to the UN Minister of Foreign Affairs Raul Roa so that he would present the viewpoint of his government on the entire Cuban issue. The delegation of Cuba would address the Security Council with a request to find a lasting and final solution to this issue. The government of Cuba is firmly convinced that such a solution can be found only on the basis of 5 points advanced on 28 October by Premier Castro.

U Thant told Castro that at that point he was not competent to discuss this issue,

although he received with understanding the viewpoint of the Prime Minister of Cuba.

Then in the conversations U Thant and Castro touched on the issue about "the UN presence" in the region of the Caribbean sea during the period of the crisis.

U Thant told Castro that in the interests of the government of Cuba and the Cuban people themselves it would be useful to have in Havana UN representatives, and, if Castro agrees, he was ready to leave 2 to 3 of his officials to establish contacts and to follow-up on their dialogue.

Castro responded that had the government of Cuba agreed at the present moment to the presence of UN representatives in Cuba, it could have been interpreted by people as consent to the presence of inspecting groups of the United Nations. While saying so, he referred to American radio broadcasts which affirm on an hourly basis that the U Thant mission had exactly the inspection goals in mind. Under such terms people might have misperceived such a step. Castro asked U Thant not to insist on this proposal.

He then declared that, if the Security Council accepted some kind of formula to resolve the Cuban issue on a permanent basis, then he, Castro, would be glad to have some kind of UN presence on the reciprocal basis. However, this cannot be done in the present phase.

In conversations with Castro, U Thant raised the question about the return to the USA on humanitarian grounds of an American pilot who, according to press publications, had vanished without a trace in the area of Cuba. Castro told him that the USA aircraft of the type U-2 had indeed violated the aerial space over Cuba in violation of international legislation and the UN Charter. It was shot down by the Cubans, the pilot died, since he could not bail out. Castro would have been ready to return the pilot, and alive, but he is dead, therefore he is ready to return the body under auspices of the UN. (This information U Thant passed to the Americans).

Castro also said that any further violation of the aerial borders of Cuba would be dealt with in a similar way.

The next question that was discussed between U Thant and Castro was about a voluntary suspension by the Soviet Union of its supplies of weapons for Cuba for a period of 2 to 3 weeks and the simultaneous

voluntary suspension of the quarantine on the part of the USA.

U Thant informed Castro about the acceptance on the part of the Soviet Union of such a voluntary commitment, and also that the USA would have also agreed to suspend the quarantine for 2-3 weeks, on the condition that there would be a mechanism for checking if Soviet ships heading for Cuba were not carrying arms.

U Thant informed Castro also that the Soviet Union had agreed that the Red Cross should deal with inspection of vessels outside of the boundaries of the territorial waters of Cuba. He said that for the Red Cross it would have been more convenient to inspect ships in the ports of arrival, and not in the open sea, if, of course, the government of Cuba agreed to that.

Castro said to this, that his government would not allow groups of the Red Cross to inspect Soviet ships on Cuban territory, but if the USSR agreed to the inspection, then the UN should start organizing this business on the open sea.

Responding to the question of U Thant about a possible time of convocation of a next session of the Security Council on the Cuban issue, Castro said that he would have preferred that the Council convene no sooner than next Wednesday, i.e. after the elections in the United States.

Com. Mikoyan thanked U Thant for interesting and useful information, stressing that this would facilitate his talks with Prime Minister Fidel Castro.

He observed that the Americans were now trying to focus all attention on the dismantling and withdrawal of missile equipment, doing nothing on their part concerning the guarantees of Cuba's security.

Therefore Castro is right when he speaks about the need to solve the Cuban issue on a permanent basis. Now it is important to move from general declarations to concrete steps for cardinal solution of the entire issue on the basis of the letters of N.S. Khrushchev [and] Kennedy, and also the just and constructive proposals of Fidel Castro. Naturally, the Americans will object to some proposals of Castro, but his proposals face in the right direction.

On the time of convening the Security Council, com. Mikoyan remarked that we understand the considerations of Fidel on this score. We also would like to say that since general principles of complete liqui-

dation of the conflict has been adopted and declared by the interested sides, and also by the UN, since the acting Secretary General is taking active part in this, then, in our opinion, the Security Council should be convened at the moment when the current negotiations would approach the phase of an agreed-upon document finalizing this crisis. Until then convening of the Security Council would hardly assist in this matter.

Com. Mikoyan voiced the idea that after the end of talks of the sides, some kind of document might be passed for approval to the Security Council and on its basis and in following up on it the Council might take a decision on subsequent practical steps. Such a document might have the character of a protocol which would describe talks that would have taken place between the sides with participation of U Thant on the basis of the letters of N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy, and also the declarations of Fidel Castro, and that would inform about the achieved agreement that, thereby, would have been sealed by the Security Council.

[Mikoyan] said to U Thant that we learned with great interest about his initiative concerning the practicality of having observers in Cuba, in the USA, and in other countries neighboring Cuba for a duration of some period. He informed [U Thant] that N.S. Khrushchev was delighted to see this initiative of U Thant and considered it to be interesting and useful. It is good that Fidel Castro took it in a positive way. This proposal contains in itself the principle of reciprocity, and the USSR is ready to support such a proposal. It could be included into a draft protocol.

He asked U Thant if he had spoken to the Americans on this subject and if so what was their attitude toward this idea.

U Thant said that in conversation with Soviet representatives he advanced several formulas for solution of the issue in its entirety, and the problem of guarantees in particular. At one of these meetings with com. Zorin he indeed proposed that, provided the agreement of the sides, the presence of the UN in the Western hemisphere, in the flashpoints, would be useful. Were it to prove acceptable, then, in the opinion of U Thant, such a measure would have facilitated a settlement of the situation in the Caribbean region on the permanent basis.

U Thant discussed this idea with heads of missions of Latin American [countries]

in the UN even before his trip to Cuba and they seemed interested. Some Latin American delegates not only were interested in this idea but also let U Thant understand that such a measure would be desirable.

The USA so far does not want to openly express its attitude towards this proposal of U Thant. Its reaction was reduced to the argument that, well, since this arrangement concerns all the countries of Western hemisphere, this issue should be discussed in the Organization of American States.

Com. Mikoyan asked U Thant about his opinion regarding a possible form of the document stating the reached agreement.

U Thant said that if the sides agree in general, then the goal will be reached through any such document in the form of protocol, joint declaration, separate declaration of the sides, agreement and even in the form of summing-up declaration of the chairman of the Security Council.

Com. Mikoyan asked U Thant also to express his personal considerations on the time of convocation of the Security Council.

U Thant said that it should be done after the elections in the USA, but everything depends on the sides' agreement. If the sides come to agreement, the Council can be convened at any time.

Then U Thant passed his wish to thank the Soviet Ambassador in Cuba for his genuine and wholehearted cooperation during the trip of U Thant. In particular, U Thant noted that our Ambassador in Havana and the Soviet officer informed him without delay about the time when dismantling of the missile units began, about the time when work will be finished, and about the fact that ships are commissioned for withdrawal of these units. In this regard U Thant asked as a matter of personal interest about the time of arrival of ships to Cuba to pick up the mentioned materiel.

Com. Mikoyan confirmed what our Ambassador in Havana had told U Thant about the time-frame of dismantling. Concerning the time-frame of withdrawal he said that those ships that are now in Cuba will not suffice. However, with regard to the continuing quarantine Soviet ships cannot sail to Cuba. Therefore it is necessary to lift the quarantine, so that Soviet ships could enter Cuban ports, unload their cargoes and load on them the dismantled units [ustanovki]. If one does it in speedily, then

perhaps 10-15 days will be required. He promised to raise this issue in the forthcoming conversation with McCloy.

U Thant said that he addresses the Americans every day with appeals to suspend the blockade. And yesterday, having returned from Cuba, he did the same, making the Americans aware that he was convinced that the dismantling had begun and was under way as it had been promised, and that it would be finished by the announced date.

Com. Mikoyan thanked U Thant for his useful and exhaustive information. They agreed that for the press they will announce about useful exchange of opinions and the friendly atmosphere of the conversation.

At the end of the conversation U Thant said that if A.I. Mikoyan would come back via New York, he (U Thant) would be glad to meet again and learn about the results of the trip. He would like that time to be a more generous host than now and to invite A.I. Mikoyan for lunch and breakfast.

The conversation was recorded by com. Zherebtsov V.N.

2.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: AVPRF; obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, copy on file at National Security Archive; translation by Vladislav M. Zubok (National Security Archive).]

Telegram from Soviet envoy G. Zhukov to CC CPSU, 2 November 1962

2 November 1962

Yesterday, on 1 November (before dinner with A.I. Mikoyan), McCloy invited me to his residence and said the following:

1. The Americans express their gratitude for the fact that the American plane making aerial photos of Cuba today was not subjected to gunfire. The photos are still being developed, but the Americans hope that they will confirm the correctness of the statement made by the Soviet general in Cuba, to the effect that the missile dismantling process has already been started.

2. McCloy offered a detailed account of how U Thant had informed him of his talks with Castro (the account coincides with what U Thant told our delegation). He said that he understood the difficulties arising from Castro's refusal of ground-based in-

spections, and that now it was necessary to find new methods of monitoring that would confirm that the dismantling and removal of the missiles had begun (in McCloy's opinion, the best solution would be aerial photos along with a check on the ships removing the cargoes from Cuba on the open sea. McCloy underscored that this monitoring should be formal—without inquiring into the details of the missiles, which are secret).

3. McCloy spoke a lot about the future prospects of an American-Soviet collaboration which would open up as a result of the settling of the Cuban crisis. In his view, it is necessary in the first place to reach an agreement on the cessation of nuclear testing, which would make a huge impression on public opinion. It would be good if this agreement could be signed by Kennedy and Khrushchev. Such a meeting would strengthen public faith that their personal contacts can be fruitful.

McCloy also believes it expedient to conclude an agreement concerning a renunciation of the military use of outer space, and to sign a treaty on at least one bilateral agreement concerning the colonizing of outer space (for example, the launching of a Soviet-American rocket aimed at Venus).

McCloy also reiterated several ideas expressed earlier by Salinger and Thompson (concerning in particular the issue of bases in Turkey—it may be possible, in his view, to eliminate them in the course of “the first stage of disarmament”—by way of “redistribution”).

4. McCloy implied that he would play the role of an unofficial intermediary in the preparation of a meeting between Kennedy and Khrushchev, which in his view could take place within a few months, if resolutions of the issues enumerated above have been completed by that time.

5. McCloy asked us to pass on his warm greetings to N. S. Khrushchev and the members of his family, from himself and his own family.

2.XI.62 G. ZHUKOV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

**A.I. Mikoyan to CC CPSU re 1
November 1962 Meeting with**

Stevenson, 2 November 1962

[...] We raised the question that it was necessary to write down in the form of a protocol the important provisions that are contained in the exchange of messages between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy taking into account the statement by Fidel Castro. The Americans by all means were evading discussion of this question and trying to bring the whole matter to the organization of control over the dismantling and withdrawal from Cuba of the Soviet missiles. Nevertheless, in the course of conversation they were obliged to answer our questions relating to the settlement of the Cuban problem in general and disclosed some of their positions that seem interesting for further negotiations. To save space in this cable we omit our remarks during the conversation. You may learn them from the transcript of the conversation which is being sent separately.

1. Though reluctantly, the Americans agreed with the need to fix in documents the corresponding commitments, including the non-aggression commitment against Cuba. In their opinion, these documents must include: a statement by the Soviet Union on the completion of the missiles' evacuation; a USA statement saying they are convinced of the withdrawal and giving corresponding non-aggression guarantees to Cuba; possibly also a statement by U Thant.

The statement by the Soviet government must be the first.

The texts of these statements will be coordinated in advance.

It is foreseen that a corresponding statement will be made by the Government of Cuba. All these statements must be presented to the Security Council.

The unwillingness of the Americans to sign a protocol, apparently, can be explained in addition by the following thing: they do not want to put their signature side by side with the Cubans'.

The Americans underlined their readiness to include in their statement provisions based on corresponding wording from Kennedy's messages regarding the issue of non-aggression guarantees for Cuba.

When we mentioned that in the American press there has appeared a statement by D. Rusk to the effect that Kennedy's statement is not a non-aggression guarantee to Cuba, Stevenson assured us that D. Rusk

had not said it, but that the press gave an erroneous interpretation of his speech.

Stevenson and McCloy confirmed that the USA are [is] ready to give a non-aggression guarantee to Cuba as it was mentioned in Kennedy's letter, if an inspection in some form confirms that the Soviet “offensive” armament is really removed from Cuba.

Stevenson and McCloy affirmed that the encampments where the Cuban exiles had been training for an invasion of Cuba were currently closed.

2. During the conversation we resolutely demanded the removal of the so-called “quarantine,” underlining that its continuation in no way can help to create a suitable atmosphere for the solution of the Cuban problem and may only complicate the situation. In this regard we noted that the Soviet Union had complied with the request from U Thant for a temporary suspension of armaments' supplies to Cuba, but that the USA had not stopped their “quarantine” for at least some time, as it had been suggested by U Thant.

McCloy and Stevenson evaded a clear answer to the question of ending the “quarantine,” having limited themselves to a reference that to the Soviet vessels going to Cuba would be applied the same procedure as it was on October 25 regarding the tanker “Bucharest,” without an inspection on board, but with the help of a hailing-request by radio.

It is illustrative that in response to our statement that in the event of dropping the practice of “quarantine” and giving our vessels the possibility to visit Cuba without any obstacles some 10-15 days will be needed to dispatch [from Cuba] all the armaments called offensive by the Americans, McCloy and Stevenson said that in their opinion it is hardly possible from the technical standpoint to carry out the mentioned volume of work in such a short period of time. According to McCloy, at least a month would be needed for that.

3. There has been a detailed discussion of methods for control of the dismantling and removal of missiles.

Apparently, feeling the weakness of their position and taking into account objections on the part of Fidel Castro to permit verification on Cuban territory, McCloy and Stevenson declared in the course of discussion that the American side would be ready not to insist on verification methods

foreseen in the message to N.S. Khrushchev and was ready to look for some new methods that would in essence give the Americans the possibility to be certain of the implementation of our commitment to withdraw the weapons.

To our specific question what new methods was he referring to, McCloy said: the USA could limit [itself] to the continuation of their flights which give them confidence that there has not resumed in Cuba an installation of the dangerous for them types of armaments.

If Castro is against a ground verification, continued McCloy, another thing could be done - a transfer of the lists of armaments withdrawn from Cuba, when they would be removed, and of the corresponding information, which however would not disclose Soviet technological secrets. We do know roughly how many missiles currently are situated in Cuba. In this case we could manage without ground verification. We are glad, - said McCloy, - that today our plane had not come under fire when it had been flying over Cuba. As far as we know the anti-aircraft missiles in Cuba are in the hands of your people, not the Cubans, although it's possible that there are some Cuban personnel.

McCloy received a very firm response that the USA [has] no right to overfly Cuba and nobody can guarantee the security of such illegal flights.

4. We raised the question of normalizing relations between the USA [and] their Latin American allies, and Cuba. We also asked what is their attitude to U Thant's plan for a UN presence in the Caribbean. The Americans flatly rejected any inspection of their territory whatsoever and declared: "You will have to trust our word."

At the same time, Stevenson said that the USA aspires to normalize the situation in the Caribbean, but under the condition of Castro's cooperation. We could in some form elaborate mutual guarantees, acceptable to Castro and his neighbors. If Castro is afraid of them, they are afraid of him, too. I consider, said Stevenson, that after the Cuban crisis is settled the tension in this region would be lessened.

In this regard we put the question in this way:

"Castro may ask me if the USA [is] going to re-establish diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba? Maybe you in-

tend to do so not immediately, but some time later?"

Stevenson said that he was not able to give an answer to that question insofar as it is part of the competence of the OAS [Organization of American States]. But perhaps we can consider the possibility of organizing corresponding regional arrangements, giving the necessary confidence to the countries of the Caribbean. I hope that steadily we will succeed in eliminating antagonism between Cuba and its neighbors.

At the same time Stevenson made the observation that currently the "antagonism" between Cuba and its neighbors is instigated by "subversive actions in this region, perhaps undertaken mutually." McCloy noted that "Cuba is the breeding ground of infection and Venezuela an example."

It was clear that in the immediate future the USA [is] not going to re-establish diplomatic and economic ties with Cuba.

5. Stevenson and McCloy stated that the USA refuse[s] point-blank to discuss the question of liquidating the American base at Guantanamo.

6. In the course of the conversation McCloy attempted to broach the subject of an eventual evacuation from Cuba of the Soviet "ground-air" anti-aircraft missiles. We have resolutely warded off this probing, declaring that such a question could not be raised and that we had sold these weapons to a number of countries, including the United Arab Republic and Indonesia. McCloy made the observation that "they are good machines against attacks from air-space."

7. McCloy and Stevenson agreed that it would be good for Soviet and American delegations to try to reach preliminary agreements over the issues to be discussed by the Security Council.

8. McCloy and Stevenson expressed satisfaction over the exchange of opinions and Stevenson underlined that the USSR and USA positions "are not so far from each other." Both of them were inquiring whether I would stop on my way back [from Cuba].

I said in response that for the moment I had no plans to do so but if necessary I assumed it would be possible.

2.XI.62 A. MIKOYAN

[Source: AVPRF; trans. V. Zaemsky; copy on file at National Security Archive.]

**Soviet Record of 1 November 1962
Dinner Conversation between CPSU
CC Politburo Member A.I. Mikoyan
and White House envoy John McCloy
and U.S. Ambassador to the United
Nations Adlai Stevenson**

Secret. Copy no. 24

RECORD OF CONVERSATION OF
com. A.I. MIKOYAN
WITH JOHN MCCLOY AND ADLAI
STEVENSON AT A DINNER IN THE
SOVIET MISSION AT THE U.N.
1 November 1962

At the outset of the conversation A.I. Mikoyan poses a question about the lifting of the American blockade on the surroundings of Cuba for the period of negotiations, as it was proposed by U Thant in his first missive to com. N.S. Khrushchev and to President Kennedy on 24 October this year.

A.I. Mikoyan says that the USSR accepted recommendation of the acting General Secretary of the U.N., and the United States did not. On 24 October U Thant proposed that the Soviet Union would stop delivery of weapons to Cuba for the duration of talks (2 to 3 weeks), and the United States during the same period would suspend the blockade. The Soviet Union fulfilled the recommendations of U Thant, but the United States did not.

McCloy remarks that U Thant seeks to start as soon as possible to check up Soviet vessels sailing to Cuba, by the forces of the International Red Cross.

Stevenson says that the United States hoped that by the end of next week observers of the International Red Cross would be able to begin their work in Cuba. Here apparently some sort of misunderstanding emerges. It was understood that the suspension of the "quarantine" would be conditioned on the simultaneous introduction of inspection.

A.I. Mikoyan objects that no such understanding took place.

McCloy remarks that perhaps U Thant did introduce the proposal mentioned by A.I. Mikoyan, but the United States accepted not his proposal, but the proposal of Chairman Khrushchev in his letter to President Kennedy.

Stevenson says that in fact the issue about immediate suspension of the “quarantine” is purely academic. Soviet ships will probably not reach Cuba until next week, and meanwhile he hopes that the inspection of the Red Cross will be already in force, and then, naturally, there will be no need for the “quarantine.”

A.I. Mikoyan reiterates that N.S. Khrushchev accepted the proposal of U Thant and the Americans did not accept it.

Stevenson. We believe that a certain understanding was achieved in the letters of N.S. Khrushchev and J. Kennedy.

A.I. Mikoyan. This is correct. What was envisaged in the letters must be implemented and will be implemented. However, had the United States adopted the same reasonable approach, permeated with good will, as was adopted by the Soviet Union, then they would have accepted the proposal of U Thant and would have lifted the blockade immediately.

McCloy. Would you make a stop on the way back [from Cuba] in New York?

A.I. Mikoyan. I have no definite plans on this score, but I would not exclude such a stop-over.

McCloy (in a jocular tone). But would Castro let you out?

A.I. Mikoyan. He and I are special friends and will work it out somehow

Stevenson. Perhaps you will bring him along over here?

A.I. Mikoyan. You showed such a poor hospitality to him, that he can hardly be convinced to come to New York again. Such a great power as the United States should be ashamed to mistreat such a small country. When Stevenson had not yet been the USA representative [in the United Nations - trans.], he had good understanding of everything, but now apparently his official position makes him speak and act in a different way.

Stevenson. We learn in government office, but we forget nothing. We immediately accepted the proposal on inspection by the Red Cross. I do not know how many Soviet ships are approaching Cuba, but I would prefer that there will be more of them, so that they would sooner take away your missiles. I must tell you that we were very favorably impressed by the speed with which Soviet officers dismantle the missiles.

McCloy. I am struck by the speed of assembling as well as disassembling [of the

missiles - trans.].

A.I. Mikoyan. Those who can assemble fast, can also disassemble fast. Our military are men of discipline, they punctually fulfill the order of N.S. Khrushchev. But there are not enough ships around Cuba to carry away the equipment which is the subject of the understanding, so in addition other ships will be necessary. And your blockade stands in their way to Cuba and, consequently, hampers the withdrawal of missiles. In other words, the “quarantine” turns itself against your own interests.

McCloy. We would gladly let your ships pass in both directions, if they carry all your missiles away. I would like to be on the ship that would transport the last missiles from Cuba, added McCloy in jest.

A.I. Mikoyan (in a jocular way). So lift the “quarantine” and then everything will be in order. Stevenson will become the one he had used to be before he was nominated [to his position] in the UN.

Stevenson. When do your ships arrive in Cuba?

A.I. Mikoyan. But you have not yet lifted the blockade. Our ships are now in the open sea, about 4-5 days away from Cuba. They should reach Cuba, disembark their load, then load themselves and leave. This would, of course, require a certain time, no less than 10-15 days.

Stevenson. We could agree on a schedule. Next week one might agree on an inspection of the Red Cross; then the “quarantine” might be lifted.

A.I. Mikoyan. I would like to know if [the leadership of] the United States think[s] that we should work out an agreement that would seal what has been said in the exchange of letters between Kennedy and Khrushchev? Or you are interested only in the dismantling and withdrawal of missiles? Would you think that we should agree on other issues touched upon in the exchange of missives, and confirm the achieved understanding in a written document?

Stevenson. First of all we want to reach understanding on the withdrawal of missile equipment from Cuba and we do not want to tolerate that until the establishment of inspection by the Red Cross there would be an uncontrolled flow of armaments into Cuba.

McCloy. There is already too much armament there. We cannot tolerate its build-up.

A.I. Mikoyan. It is correct that there is sufficient amount of armament in Cuba, but we already stopped sending it there.

McCloy. Yes, but we cannot risk, when it may happen that some arms are being withdrawn and other arms are being shipped in. When the missile equipment will be shipped off, the political atmosphere will ameliorate and it will be easier to agree. You preferred U.N. inspections to an inspection of the Red Cross. We agreed to that. We are interested in your ships reaching Cuba soon, and we will not obstruct their way.

A.I. Mikoyan. Arms were not provided to Cuba to attack the United States, but as a means of containment [*sderzhivaiyuchego*], so that there was no aggression against Cuba. But since in his answer to the letter of N.S. Khrushchev J. Kennedy gave the assurance that neither the United States, nor its Latin American allies would attack Cuba, we declared our readiness to pull out some types of armaments from Cuba.

Stevenson. I do not think there is any disagreement on the issue that Soviet ships should enter the ports of Cuba. It is only that the “quarantine” should be preserved until the establishment of the Red Cross inspection. We are interested to see that there will be no new shipments of arms, and we hope you will understand us.

A.I. Mikoyan. We agreed with the proposals of U Thant and declared that we would not bring armaments to Cuba pending the talks. Those ships that are now at sea carrying no weapons at all. I must say that Stevenson is a good diplomat: I am pushing him in one direction of the talk, but he veers off.

Then for some time the conversation was focused on the issues of protocol nature.

In the second half of the conversation the discussion of business resumes.

A.I. Mikoyan. Yet I would like to pose the following question. Would the USA government think to come to an agreement where all that was said in the exchange of well-known letters would be fixed? I have in mind the kind of document that would formulate the settlement of the crisis. We think it is preferable to work out such a document.

V.V. Kuznetsov. The need in working out such a document stems from the understanding achieved between the sides about the settlement of the crisis.

Stevenson. In our opinion, the sole problem that confronts us - it is to work out conditions for inspection that should be carried out by representatives of the Red Circle. This is relatively easy task. One could set up two check-points at the approaches to Cuba's ports, in the South and in the North, where two ships of the Red Cross could be located. These might be ships of neutral countries or any other ships, perhaps even sailing hospitals. On board there could be Red Cross inspectors who could check on ships going for Cuba, so that the character of this check-up would be via radio - inquiring on the ship's origins, where it goes and with what cargo. Inspectors would not board ships. I think that such [a form of] inspection should not create problems. We would be glad to hear from you which ships, in your opinion, must be utilized for these aims. I would like to repeat that one could easily reach understanding on this issue.

There is, however, one problem: measures to check the fulfillment of obligations on dismantling and withdrawal of missile equipment from Cuba. As I understood from U Thant, Castro did not agree to UN inspections stipulated in the exchange of letters between J. Kennedy and N.S. Khrushchev. We hope that you will discuss this issue once again in Havana.

McCloy. I must emphasize that we do not accept the 5 conditions of Castro as the conditions for fulfillment of what had been said in the letter of Mr. Khrushchev.

Stevenson. The problem that concerns us most is that an inspection should be carried out before you report to the Security Council about the completion of withdrawal of missile equipment. Naturally, there should be a check-up of how this undertaking is implemented. I think that such a check-up need not be difficult to carry out.

In addition to that, of course, there is the issue of the form of USA assurance that Cuba will not be subjected to invasion. This also need not present any difficulties.

McCloy. And to a certain extent this is an answer to the question previously posed by Mr. Mikoyan.

A.I. Mikoyan. You keep focusing all attention only on the issue of withdrawal of armaments from Cuba and on inspection. However, the first-order question is to grant to Cuba guarantees of non-intervention against it on the part of other countries of the Western hemisphere, recognition of the

sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Cuban Republic, observation of its territorial inviolability, non-interference into its domestic affairs. Castro demands it, and you apparently do not want to give such assurances.

Castro puts forward also a demand to liquidate the U.S. base in Guantanamo. Why are you refusing to discuss this issue? While pressing your demands, you do not want to hear the legitimate demands of the other side. Of course, this is an issue of American-Cuban relations, but in any case this issue must be discussed with Castro.

The exchange of letters between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy - this is in essence already an agreement. But by itself the exchange of letters cannot be considered as a final document. One must carry out negotiations to work out such a final document on the basis of the exchange of letters, since this issue has acquired a bilateral international character.

We suggest to conduct negotiations on this basis and believe that the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba should sign a protocol, with participation of U Thant. Such a protocol might fix all the basic premises contained in the letters of N.S. Khrushchev and J. Kennedy.

I repeat, we think that you should consider the proposals advanced by Castro. They are legitimate ones. You should also consider the issue of the base in Guantanamo. I see that you disagree with Castro's demand, but it does not mean that you should turn down any discussion of his demands. One cannot turn such a discussion down, when one wants to normalize the situation.

I would touch on an interesting plan advanced by U Thant; after an agreement among the parties involved, which could be approved by the Security Council, one might agree on the presence of UN inspectors in the area of the Caribbean Sea, including Cuba, and on the South-East coast of the United States and the neighboring Latin American countries. These inspectors could watch over implementation of the understanding on mutual non-interference between the United States and Cuba. This is a very important proposal and its implementation would give a change to fully settle the conflict. One should take into account that Cuba is an independent state. It is impossible to demand that some kind of in-

spection would cover only its territory, if there were no analogous inspection covering the territory of the other side, on the basis of reciprocity.

I must emphasize that if the letter of J. Kennedy had not told of guarantees of non-intervention against Cuba, we would not have agreed to dismantle and withdraw missile equipment from Cuba. But now it comes out as follows: we are withdrawing weapons, and you are back-pedaling on your commitments. Castro does not have trust in your word and he has a right [not to], since the territory of Cuba has already been invaded. It would be a different matter if there would be an official document enforced, containing appropriate guarantees for Cuba and approved by the Security Council.

I would like to know your opinion about the guarantees. What can I tell Castro when I meet him? We stem from the fact that the letter from Kennedy already contains a basis for an agreement on granting to Cuba the guarantees of non-intervention. This is a bilateral problem and both sides must resolve it and fix it in an agreement.

McCloy. In our opinion, the most important [thing] is to withdraw appropriate [offensive - trans.] types of armaments from Cuba as soon as possible. If it is not done, the situation will worsen very much. One can speak about the assurances of Kennedy concerning non-intervention against Cuba, but Castro must not set new conditions on withdrawal of missile equipment. Meanwhile, Castro told U Thant that he would not tolerate UN inspections. The Soviet Union and Cuba must agree between each other on what would be the form of inspection. It is a matter of your relationship. We have only one interest: that the armaments on which we have achieved the understanding would be shipped away and that we would be convinced that they are really shipped away.

I do not think that there would be any problems on the question of the access of ships and on the withdrawal of missile equipment from Cuba. The main thing is to remove missile equipment.

As to the question on granting the guarantees of non-intervention to Cuba, if you think that what the President said is not enough, one could talk about some kind of appropriate commitment [*obiazatelstve*].

You are posing a question about the possible presence of UN observers on USA

territory, so that there would be no invasion of Cuba. I must say that if you keep insisting on that, there will be additional complications.

A.I. Mikoyan. U Thant expressed this idea.

McCloy. No, he did not suggest it. I repeat: nothing will come out of it.

A.I. Mikoyan. Today in conversation with me U Thant reiterated this idea and said that this issue should be discussed at the Organization of American States.

Stevenson. We believe that the exchange of letters between Kennedy and Khrushchev contains concrete and clear formulas. I think that there is no need for any new understanding, except for resolution of the issue about the inspection method. If we fail to carry out ground inspection, let us seek other means which would assure us that the armaments are withdrawn. Otherwise the danger of conflict will be reborn. I hope that, when the atmosphere will clear up and the missile equipment will be withdrawn from Cuba, it will be easier to agree on other issues. Kennedy has already given appropriate assurances concerning non-intervention against Cuba, and we can confirm it.

We would like to say clearly that any discussion of the issue about liquidation of our base in Guantanamo is out of question. It was given up [*ustuplena*] to us by the government of Cuba on a legal basis, and the American people will under no circumstances renounce it.

A.I. Mikoyan. But the government of Cuba puts forward this question, so it should be discussed.

V.V. Kuznetsov. The government of Cuba has put this question even earlier.

McCloy. We will not concede on this. The position of Castro represents an obstacle on the way to fulfilling commitments formulated in the letter of Mr. Khrushchev.

A.I. Mikoyan. Castro is not and will not be an obstacle to fulfillment of these commitments. The armaments we are talking about is Soviet weaponry and it will be evacuated. As for Castro, he has declared that he would assist the evacuation of these armaments.

McCloy. But he has 145 thousand soldiers against 10 thousand Russians. He can obstruct the dismantling [of missiles--trans.]. Moreover, I think he is already obstructing it.

A.I. Mikoyan. The government of Cuba

has the right of sovereignty and one must seek its agreement on any kind of inspection on Cuban territory. It put forward five conditions, including the demand about liquidation of the American base in Guantanamo. However, beside the issue of the base, there are four more points in Castro's program, and these points are in full agreement with what Kennedy wrote in his letter to Khrushchev. Why don't you want to accept them?

Stevenson. There is only one issue between the Soviet Union and the USA: about full withdrawal from Cuba of certain types of armaments under conditions of inspection and in the presence of the understanding that the supplies of this weaponry will not be resumed. Under these conditions the guarantees of Cuba's security on the part of the United States will be ensured.

Castro raised a number of other issues, but they have nothing to do with Soviet-American relations. In our negotiations we should begin to consider the issues that are within the realm of Soviet-American relations, in the framework of the understanding between Khrushchev and Kennedy.

A.I. Mikoyan. Speaking about the exchange of letters between N.S. Khrushchev and J. Kennedy, you blow up only one aspect and maintain silence on the other. You dodge such issues as lifting of the blockade, granting the guarantees of independence to Cuba. We believe that all this should be fixed [*zafiksirovano*] in the document where certain formulas should be reiterated and specified. We believe that our negotiations should result in a document registered in the United Nations and approved by the Security Council. Otherwise, what is happening? The ink has not yet dried up on the letter, but Rusk is already declaring that the United States has not guaranteed the independence of Cuba. It was published in your newspapers, and I read about it on my way to New York.

Stevenson. Rusk said nothing to disavow the guarantees that have been granted in Kennedy's letter. The press gave a wrong interpretation to his declaration.

A.I. Mikoyan. We are proposing to you to prepare jointly an appropriate document and introduce it jointly to the Security Council, then there will be no other interpretations.

Stevenson. I would like to say a few words about the procedure. U Thant believes

that the operation could be finalized in two statements: the Soviet Union could make announcement about the end of withdrawal of the certain types of weapons from Cuba, and the United States would make an announcement that we made sure that these weapons are withdrawn from Cuba. Earlier it was supposed that the appropriate check-up should be done by the forces of the UN, but after Castro's refusal to let UN representatives into Cuba, the question emerged about the method of inspection.

After the withdrawal of the certain types of weapons from Cuba will be confirmed, the USA will declare the abolition of the "quarantine" and that it guarantees non-intervention of Cuba. I see no reason for any other treaties and documents. If the Soviet side has some draft proposals, it is desirable to obtain them, and the American side then will do the same thing.

A.I. Mikoyan. There is no time to consider this issue in detail. It seems to me we should think how to continue the talks.

V.V. Kuznetsov. If the American side agrees, we will discuss this issue.

A.I. Mikoyan. On our side we prefer to have a protocol.

Stevenson. The Soviet Union can and must ensure the withdrawal of the certain types of armaments and a verification that would satisfy the USA and Latin American countries.

The question, however, emerges on what form of inspection is feasible under current circumstances. Four days have already elapsed, and there is no inspection in sight. Therefore, now we should discuss possible forms of inspection. We do not want to constrain you by those formulas that were advanced concerning international inspection. If Castro does not want such an inspection, one can think of different forms of control.

McCloy. We should look at what is acceptable and feasible, but in any case the inspection should be introduced. Therefore we should adapt ourselves to the new situation.

In the first order, of course, we should, as they say, remove the pistol from the negotiating table, in other words to dismantle and withdraw the missiles.

Stevenson. I do not think that some kind of protocol will be necessary, besides the declarations that will be made in the Security Council.

A.I.Mikoyan. Normalization would be complete if the Soviet Union, the USA and Cuba signed a joint document together with the UN Secretary General on the basis of the exchange of letters between N.S. Khrushchev and J. Kennedy. In any case, this issue cannot be resolved without Cuba. A decision in which Cuba is not a party will not be binding for her. Cuba must have guarantees of non-intervention.

I would like to know: do you have any ideas about forms of control? If you have them - discuss them in the next few days with V.V. Kuznetsov.

Stevenson. As to the territorial integrity of Cuba, the formulas in the letter of Kennedy are simple and clear: after certain types of weapons will be removed from Cuba, the USA will make an announcement about the guarantee against any kind of invasion of Cuba.

McCloy. As to the forms of verification, the ideal form in my mind would be regular overflights by planes doing aerial photo-reconnaissance, and ground inspection. I hope that the Soviet Union would bear on Castro so that he will agree to the conduct of such inspection as was stipulated in the letter of N.S.Khrushchev. However, if Castro refuses to accept such inspection, we should look for another form. The USA might continue overflights by its planes giving us confidence that one does not resume in Cuba assembly of types of weapons that represent danger for us. But in this case we would like to have assurances that our plans will not be downed. One could also consider yet another possibility. Could you pass to us the lists of armament that is being withdrawn from Cuba? We know approximately how many missiles you now have in Cuba. If you could pass to us the lists of what you will transport on your ships (of course, I understand that these documents will not contain specifications of these armaments), then through comparison of this data with the data about the presence of armaments in Cuba, that is in our disposal, we would follow the process of evacuation of armaments that are of danger for us. I believe that this would be enough. In this case we would get on along ground inspection.

The system of passing of the lists of cargo removed from Cuba would not touch on your security interests. As to overflights, you, as we understand, cannot guarantee that the Cubans would not shoot at our planes.

But we are glad that when today our plane flew over Cuba, it was not shot at. As far as we know, the anti-aircraft missiles deployed in Cuba are not in the hands of the Cubans, but in the hands of your people. Today we intercepted radio-commands and conversations of the anti-aircraft units deployed in Cuba and that confirmed us again in our conclusion. I must say that we are glad that these anti-aircraft missiles are in the hands of the Russians whose hands are not itching like the hands of the Cubans.

In passing, I would like to say that although we do not include anti-aircraft missiles into the category of offensive weapons, we would very much like that you withdraw these missiles as well.

A.I.Mikoyan. As I see, your sense of humor has completely disappeared.

Stevenson. In your conversations in Havana you could cite good arguments in favor of ground inspection: on one side, it would assure us that you are fulfilling your obligations, on the other hand, Castro would obtain confidence that no invasion of Cuba would take place: since U.N. observers would be around.

A.I.Mikoyan. I believe that in the course of today's conversation we laid the ground for upcoming negotiations. I think that we should not now go into detail. You should reflect on what we have spoken about here. We will prepare our drafts as well. It seems to me that until the election day it would be hard for you to take any decisions, but, on the other hand, one should not procrastinate with liquidation of the Cuban crisis.

Stevenson. We could agree even tomorrow in all details with a plan of inspection of ships by the forces of the Red Cross if both sides approve of the proposal of U Thant. We should not put off resolution of this issue. What flag would be on these two inspection ships is of no significance to us.

As to the oversight of the territory of Cuba, if Castro refuses to agree on ground inspection, we could limit ourselves to unilateral conduct of aerial reconnaissance. For this we would only need your assurance that our planes will not be shot at.

McCloy. It seems that it would take not 10-15 days, but probably a month for removal of your missiles.

A.I.Mikoyan. All these are [mere] details. We brought with us military experts - a general and colonel, who could discuss all

these technical issues with you. I would like to speak on another, more important question. It is out of question that we agree with you now on overflights of your planes over Cuba: it is sovereign Cuban territory. But if the USA agreed to the inspection over the area of Miami, it would be a good thing. Then, possibly, the Cubans would agree to such inspection over their territory. One cannot not carry out unilateral inspection - no matter which, ground or aerial. The Cubans would have full reason to be offended, if you were granted the right of regular and permanent overflight over their territory, in a unilateral way.

As for inspections which must ensure a verification of the dismantling and withdrawal of our missiles, here we stand on the same position that was expressed in the letters of N.S. Khrushchev.

Stevenson. As to ground inspection, it was U Thant, not us, who came up with a proposal about the presence of UN inspectors during the dismantling and withdrawal of the missiles. Incidentally, he had in mind permanent inspection till the end of dismantling of the missiles. This would serve the interests of both sides. I understand that Cuba is an independent country, but if it agrees with this, then there would be no need to seek other forms of check-up.

A.I.Mikoyan. We agree to conduct ground inspection, as the letter of N.S. Khrushchev stated, but it is necessary to have some kind of element of reciprocity so that this understanding does not affect the national feelings of the Cubans. This also flows from my conversation with U Thant.

I would like to know if McCloy and Stevenson consider today's exchange of opinion useful?

Stevenson. The conversation was useful and I became persuaded that our positions stay not too far apart.

A.I.Mikoyan. There is misunderstanding [*nedoponimaniie*] as far as the issue of reciprocity of inspections is concerned. U Thant said that Castro is concerned with the presence on the USA of camps where Cuban emigres prepare themselves for invasion similar to one that took place last year.

McCloy. I must assure you that these camps no longer exist, they are closed everywhere.

A.I.Mikoyan. You mean that they do not exist in Latin American countries as well?

McCloy. The camps are closed everywhere. Perhaps there is something somewhere, but in any case the USA does not support this business.

A.I.Mikoyan. But you count Cuban emigres among your own military forces?

McCloy. We are not training them for invasion of Cuba. We allow volunteers of any nationality to be enlisted in our military forces, even Russians can do it. In any case, I assure you that there are no more camps in the USA where Cuban emigres are trained, prepared for invasion of Cuba.

However I would like to tell you frankly, that any inspection on USA territory is out of question. You have to trust in our word.

Stevenson. I want to say that the USA is trying to normalize the situation in the area of the Caribbean sea, but on condition of Castro's cooperation. We might work out some form of mutual guarantees acceptable for Castro and his neighbors. If Castro is afraid of them, they, too, are afraid of him. I believe that after the settlement of the Cuban crisis the situation in this region will

become more relaxed.

A.I.Mikoyan. It is very important what you are saying. Castro might ask me: is the USA going to restore diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba or this question is not on the agenda? Perhaps you have in mind not to do it right away, but after some time? I would like to know what I can tell Castro.

Stevenson. You understand that I cannot answer this question. It is within the competence of the Organization of American States. We cannot conduct business with Castro without its involvement. But one could think of certain regional arrangements providing confidence to the countries of the Caribbean sea. I hope that we would be able gradually to liquidate the antagonism between Cuba and her neighbors. Now this antagonism is being heated by subversive activities which, perhaps, reciprocate each other in this region.

McCloy. I would say that Cuba is the source of infection, and the recent events in Venezuela provide an example. But I would not like to dwell now on this issue. I am

satisfied with today's exchange of opinions. I would be glad to meet you and follow up on this conversation, on your way back from Cuba.

The conversation lasted for 3 hours 40 minutes. Those present were com. V.V. Kuznetsov, A.F. Dobrynin, M.A. Menshikov, G.A. Zhukov; from the American side participated J. McCloy, A. Stevenson, A. Akalovsky.

Note-takers:

G.Zhukov

Yu.Vinogradov.

[Source: AVP RF; obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, copy on file at National Security Archive; translation by Vladislav M. Zubok (National Security Archive).]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 2 November 1962

2 November 1962

THE MIKOYAN-CASTRO TALKS, 4-5 NOVEMBER 1962: THE CUBAN VERSION

[Editor's Note: While a large, albeit incomplete, complex of Russian documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis has become available to researchers since 1991—as exemplified by the selection of translated materials in this and past *Bulletins*—documents on the events of the fall of 1962 are still only beginning to trickle out of Cuban archives. The two documents below, translated from Spanish, represent a rare and encouraging sign (as does Piero Gleijeses' article on Cuban policy in Africa elsewhere in this issue) that prospects for historical research in Cuban archives may improve.

The Cuban records concern the tense conversations between Fidel Castro (and other members of the Cuban leadership) and senior Soviet envoy Anastas I. Mikoyan on 4-5 November 1962, in the immediate aftermath of USSR Premier Nikita Khrushchev's acceptance on October 28 of U.S. President John F. Kennedy's demand that he withdraw Soviet nuclear missiles from Cuba. They were apparently released

in response to the publication in the *Bulletin* in 1995 of lengthy Soviet records of the same conversations.¹ The materials were obtained from the Institute of History in Cuba by Prof. Philip Brenner (American University), who provided them to CWIHP, and translated from Spanish by Carlos Osorio (National Security Archive).

While the Cuban documents themselves do not offer any startling information or insights not present in the far more detailed Soviet records of the same conversations—a quick comparison of the two versions of the identical conversations finds them broadly compatible—they are presented as a symbol of what historians can hope will be a thorough process of eventually reconstructing Soviet-Cuban relations on the basis of solid archival evidence from both sides, which can then be compared and cross-checked. Given the amount of passion and controversy that has surrounded this question during the Cold War, and which continues to infuse U.S.-Cuban relations (as Fidel Castro remains in charge nearly four decades after the revolution that brought him to power), the availability of scholarly perspectives and contemporaneous docu-

mentary evidence from Cuban, Russian, and American sources, as well as a continuation of the oral history process that has begun to involve senior Cuban officials in international explorations of such key events as the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis,² is clearly a precondition for a serious and comprehensive analysis.

Unfortunately, little information is available at present on the provenance of the Cuban documents provided below, including their precise archival location or who took the notes that are presented; the *Bulletin* hopes to supply additional information, as well as further evidence from Cuban archives should it emerge, in future issues.]

[Translator's Note: The translations at times read awkwardly, for the Spanish documents themselves are occasionally confusing, mixing tenses, subjects and objects in the same phrase. Mikoyan, a Soviet national, appears to be speaking a Castillian Spanish, as he often uses the auxiliary "haber" for the past tense. The note-taker is presumably a Cuban national, so he sometimes skips transcribing the past tense as was used

continued on page 339

We will inform Fidel Castro of the content of the documents [not further identified-ed.]. He has entrusted me to convey a translation of the draft to President Dorticos, and to reach an agreement with him on all points.

Dorticos, having read through the document, said that in principle the document serves the interests of Cuba, and that it would be approved.

Separate remarks will be introduced after the discussion of our proposals with Fidel Castro and the other leaders, and also after their talks with Comrade A. I. Mikoyan, which are slated for today.

2.XI.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from A.I. Mikoyan in New York to CC CPSU, 2 November 1962

2 November 1962

From the following telegram you will learn the details of the important statement made by McCloy in the talks on monitoring the dismantling of the "offensive weaponry." He declared that in view of Castro's refusal to agree to a ground-based monitoring, the Americans were willing not to insist [on that], knowing the forms and methods of monitoring put forth in Khrushchev's message, [but] that it was necessary to find other methods for convincing the Americans that the dismantling process had been completed and that everything had been removed.

In response to my question about whether there was some concrete proposal as to how this should be done, he said the following: to allow them the possibility of flights over Cuba for inspections from the air, without ground-based monitoring; this was the first point. The second was that the Soviets provide the Americans with information about how much of the weaponry has been dismantled and removed, and when. The important part of this is not to impart secret military information that reveals the nature and capacities of this weaponry.

I rejected here the possibility of flights over Cuba, since that would affect the sovereignty of Cuba itself. The proposal about

information from our side, I said, should be discussed with our military specialists, who arrived with me to aid Kuznetsov.

McCloy reported with great satisfaction that on 1 November their plane had flown over Cuba without being fired at, and had made photos. He attributed this to the presence of Soviet specialists at the anti-aircraft missile installations.

I conclude that if our agreement with Castro not to shoot down American planes retains its force, then when they fly one or two more times it will mean that inspections on the dismantling have been carried out. There remains the issue of inspections on the removal of the dismantled weaponry, which could be resolved through means suggested by McCloy.

In view of this, Castro's position, which rejects the possibility of on-site inspections, will cease to be an obstacle to settling with the Americans the issue of monitoring the dismantling and removal of the weaponry.

I consider all this to be expedient.

In my talks with Castro I will fully explain our position on the issue of monitoring in accordance with Khrushchev's message, I will show him its correctness and acceptability, from our point of view, for Cuba.

In connection with the Americans' proposal laid out earlier, and taking into account the Cubans' arrogance, I consider it expedient not to insist or ensure that they reject their position on not allowing observers onto their territory to check on the dismantling and removal process, the position which they have made clear to U Thant and have published several times in the press.

In truth, in Castro's speech yesterday this position was made to seem somewhat more flexible.

I await instructions concerning this matter in Havana.

2.XI.62 A. MIKOYAN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from A.I. Mikoyan in New York to CC CPSU, 2 November 1962

2 November 1962

Yesterday in the hour-long discussion with McCloy and Stevenson, the positions of the parties on all issues connected with the Cuban conflict were explained, as well as the American position in the form in which the Americans consider it necessary to define it.

We will be sending to you a short exposition of the most important points of the discussion within 2 or 3 hours, and today, 2 November and 1:00 in the afternoon I will be flying to Cuba. Our comrades will compose a detailed record of the conversation, and will send it after I am gone. The conversation was important, and you should become familiarized with that detailed record of it.

McCloy has declared that with the aim of speeding up the removal of the missiles, before the fine-tuning of the observation system by the Red Cross has been reached, they agree to and are interested in allowing Soviet vessels bound for Cuba entry into Cuban ports without inspection, by way of a hail like the one that was given to the tanker "Bucharest."

We are introducing a proposal to give instructions to all our vessels bound for Cuba to proceed to their destinations.

2.XI.62 A. MIKOYAN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister A. Gromyko to unidentified recipient, 2 November 1962

2 November 1962

The head of the American delegation at the negotiations in New York, McCloy, has informed Comrade Kuznetsov on 31 October that Washington has decided that until the Red Cross has begun its monitoring of the vessels bound for Cuba, it would not carry out inspections on these vessels, but to apply to them the same procedure that was applied to the tanker "Bucharest." During this time the "quarantine" will be officially continued.

As is well known, the tanker "Bucharest" passed through a region under American "quarantine" without hindrance.

Six Soviet vessels now on the open sea beyond the announced limits of the “quarantine” have received orders to proceed into the Cuban ports, and at present they are now on their way toward Cuba.

A. G.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V. V. Kuznetsov and Ambassador to the UN V.A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 3 November 1962

3 November 1962

On 3 November Morozov, Mendelievich, and Timerbaev had a meeting with Narasimhan and Loutfi (replacing U Thant) for the examination of technical issues connected with the sending of observers from the International Red Cross Committee to ascertain that on the Soviet vessels bound for Cuba there is no weaponry considered offensive by the USA.

Narasimhan said that the the secretariat of the UN in New York had not yet received the definitive consent of the International Red Cross to its participation in the organization of the monitoring. An answer from the Red Cross could be received today, 3 November.

Narasimhan also laid out the thoughts of the Americans, as he understood them, regarding the Red Cross’s monitoring procedure.

The USA considers it expedient to deploy two vessels with observers from the International Red Cross on the open sea near the Cuban coast—one 8 to 10 miles off Havana, and another in the strait between Cuba and Haiti. The vessels should have radio contact with the UN. On each vessel there should be two groups of International Red Cross observers. Each group should contain eight observers. In this way, 32 observers will be needed in all.

In response to our question about how to manage such a large number of observers, especially when bearing in mind that Stevenson in his talks with us on 1 November of this year had expressed his view that the International Red Cross inspections

could be reduced to radio interrogations of passing ships, Narasimhan answered that in many cases it will be precisely that, but that the International Red Cross observers should have the right to carry out inspections (to check documents, to inspect ship holds, and so on), if such a necessity should arise.

Our representatives remarked that such a proposal from Narasimhan concerning the conferral to the International Red Cross groups of inspection rights contradicts the views expressed earlier by Stevenson. We will continue to insist that the inspections be limited to interrogations by radio.

The USA, Narasimhan continued, is prepared to provide its own transportation for the International Red Cross inspectors. This may be ordinary transportation for the conveyance of troops, even though they would be unarmed and would contain on board civilian passengers.

We told Narasimhan that the Soviet Union, as had already been declared to U Thant, had given its consent to the conveyance of the International Red Cross observers either by Soviet or by neutral vessels. Narasimhan responded that he knew about this, but all the same considered it possible to inform the Soviet Union of this proposal by the USA, which, Narasimhan said, works towards the interests of a speedy organization of the inspections. The USA, in his words, has no objections to the use of Soviet ships. Narasimhan asked us to explain, if possible by 5 November, how soon the Soviet Union could prepare its ships for the International Red Cross observers. For his part, Narasimhan will make inquiries by this time about the possibility of chartering neutral vessels located near Cuba.

Narasimhan raised the issue of reimbursing the costs of chartering the vessels and constituting the International Red Cross groups. In response to the question of how the USA imagines covering the costs associated with the carrying out of inspections by the International Red Cross, Narasimhan said that it was proposing two possible variants—either through the UN (that is, according to their pay scale), or to divide the costs equally between the USSR and the USA.

Our representatives answered that the USA had illegally imposed the so-called “quarantine,” that they were now pushing for inspections on vessels bound for Cuba, and that it was completely clear that it is they who should covers the expenses for the

carrying out of such inspections. In future negotiations we should proceed from the assumption that the Soviet Union will assume expenses only for the maintenance of Soviet vessels. As far as the maintenance of the International Red Cross vessels is concerned, we will push for the USA or the UN bearing the burden of these expenses. (It is not out of the question that the International Red Cross will itself pay the expenses for the upkeep of the groups.)

On the issue of how long the inspection procedure by the International Red Cross would be continued, Narasimhan said that it should be carried out for a period of three to four weeks. But it is possible that the duration could be shorter. Everything depends on how long the removal of weaponry from Cuba would continue. As soon as all the weaponry is removed, the inspections, it seems, should cease.

We emphasized that the inspections on vessels by the International Red Cross should be of a short-term nature, as was declared by U Thant in his provisional proposal concerning this issue, which was approved by the Soviet Union. In the future, with regard to time limits we will proceed with aim of imposing the shortest possible limits. We will aim for ceasing the inspections immediately after the removal of the dismantled installations, and the approval by the Security Council of corresponding resolutions for the conclusive settlement of the Cuban crisis.

If our approval of the conveyance of the International Red Cross representatives on Soviet ships is still valid, we ask that you inform us immediately of which vessels in particular are being selected for this purpose, and when they can arrive in the Caribbean Sea area.

Since the Cubans will evidently not agree to admit the International Red Cross observers onto the territory of Cuba in order to then admit them onto Soviet ships, we ask that you inform us what would be the most appropriate port in the Caribbean Sea area in which to take on board these International Red Cross observers.

The next meeting with Narasimhan is slated for the morning of 5 November.

3.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV
V. ZORIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK,

provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 4 November 1962¹⁸

4 November 1962

Today talks were conducted between A.I. Mikoyan and Comrades Fidel Castro, O. Dorticos, R. Castro, E. Guevara, E. Aragonéz, and C.R. Rodríguez, as well as myself.

Comrade Mikoyan conveyed warm, fraternal greetings from the Presidium of the CC CPSU and N.S. Khrushchev to the Cuban leaders. He expressed a lofty appreciation of the Cuban revolution, and support for the rebuff to the interventionists; he spoke about our support for Cuba; and he remarked that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was delighted by the courage and fearlessness displayed by the leaders of Cuba's revolution in these perilous days, and the readiness of the Cuban people to hold firm. Then Comrade Mikoyan said that when the Central Committee learned of the misunderstanding arising in Cuba of several issues and decisions made by us, they came to the conclusion that it would be impossible to clarify these issues by way of mere correspondence. The Central Committee made the decision to send Comrade Mikoyan to Cuba to clarify to our friends our position, and to inform them of issues that are of interest to them. Comrade Mikoyan remarked that he naturally did not have any intention of exerting pressure; his task was simply to explain our position.

Knowing our Cuban friends, A.I. Mikoyan said, I am sure that they too will agree with this. It could of course turn out such that even after the explanations there will be certain points on which our points of view will remain different.

Fidel Castro declared that he has already informed the Cuban comrades present at the talks of the issues raised by him yesterday before Comrade Mikoyan, and made a short resume of these issues.

A.I. Mikoyan remarked that Fidel Castro spoke yesterday in detail and with sincerity, and asked whether the other com-

rades wanted to add anything to this, whether they had other remarks to make.

O. Dorticos asked for an explanation of why N.S. Khrushchev approved the proposal made by Kennedy to declare that there would be no attack on Cuba on the condition of the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba, even though the Cuban government had not yet at this time expressed its own opinion on this proposal.

C.R. Rodríguez put a question to Comrade Mikoyan—where does the Soviet leadership see the essence of victory, does it consist in military success or in diplomatic success? We believed, Rodríguez noted, that we could not yet talk about victory, since the guarantees from the USA were ephemeral.

Then A.I. Mikoyan, developing arguments made in N.S. Khrushchev's letters to Fidel Castro, and also from the discussion of the issue in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, offered additional arguments with the aim of driving away any doubts from the minds of our Cuban comrades. He spoke moreover of the main points of his talks with U Thant, McCloy, and Stevenson.

We will send a full record of the conversation to Moscow via diplomatic mail. Further information on certain new points touched on in Mikoyan's explanations will be provided by separate telegram.

The talks lasted seven hours, more than five hours of which were taken up by Comrade Mikoyan's explanations. Our Cuban comrades listened with attentiveness to A.I. Mikoyan, were interested in details, and sustained the general feeling of cordiality and trust.

We agreed to continue the talks in the same composition tomorrow, on 5 November, at 2:00 in the afternoon local time.

4.XI.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko to Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and Ambassador to the UN Zorin in New York, 4 November 1962

4 November 1962

Your thoughts on the statement that Stevenson should make in connection with his letter and memorandum do not provoke any objections.

In addition it is necessary for you to say the following:

Since when have the planes named by Stevenson [IL-28 bombers—ed.] become offensive weaponry[?] After all, these planes are of a type considered outmoded both in its altitude ceilings and in its speed. The putting forth of such a demand constitutes an intentional seeking out of issues that encourage discord and a continuation of the tense state of our relations.

The planes mentioned by Stevenson are associated with coastal defense weaponry. Such a plane cannot appear in conditions of war over enemy territory, since it does not possess the capacity for attaining the necessary altitude and speed. It can appear over such territory only with an air escort. Virtually any military expert would recognize that these planes cannot be placed in the category of offensive weaponry at the present time.

If the USA honestly gave assurances that it would not invade Cuba, then the possession of these planes by the Cubans should not elicit any concern.

We understood the concerns of the Americans when talk began to turn to a definite sort of missile weaponry. Missiles are indeed an uninterceptable and instantaneously effective sort of weapon. There is no reason to put outdated weaponry in the offensive category. Such weaponry will have a defensive, auxiliary function.

As far as photo reconnaissance and reconnaissance in general are concerned, used as they are by all countries, experience shows that it does not always reflect the actual situation.

All this provides the grounds for concluding that the most important issues here must be talked about. We must mutually fulfill the obligations assumed by all parties, and then the issue will be exhausted.

A. Gromyko

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram (No.4448) from the Minister of the USSR Merchant Fleet to Captain of Ship "Amata" via Soviet ambassador in Havana (Alekseev), 5 November 1962

5 November 1962

I ask that you transmit information on the location of the ship "Amata." Your ship has been selected for use by the Organization of the United Nations for the conveyance of a group of representatives from the International Red Cross consisting of 16 people. Your location, after you take this group on board, should be near the port of Havana, but beyond the 12-mile zone of Cuba's territorial waters. The vessel chosen for these operations should arrive in Havana on 6 November. If you have cargo in your holds leave it in the holds, since the deck should be free. Your ship's number has already been communicated to the UN, as well as the fact that you will be operating at a frequency of 500 kilohertz; beginning on 6 November they will be able to contact you from the UN radio station. On your arrival in Havana, immediately contact our envoy. Bring the vessel into complete order, temporarily move your equipment and crew into tighter quarters, and prepare room for the comfortable accommodation of the representatives of the Red Cross. It is assumed that this group will be with you until 12 November of this year. You will have to come to an agreement with the head of this group concerning food-related matters. You should have ready for operation the ship's motor boat, on which the representatives will be able to travel out onto the arriving vessels. You should follow all the instructions of the group. Report on your carrying out of these instructions, and keep us regularly informed, through closed communication, of your operations.

BAKAEV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko to Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and Ambassador to the UN

Zorin in New York, 5 November 1962

You must adhere to the following position in your negotiations on the lifting of the blockade, elimination of tension, and normalization of the situation in the Caribbean Sea.

The negotiations are being conducted with the aim of eliminating the tense situation which has been threatening to explode into thermonuclear war.

The basis of these negotiations is the agreement reached through an exchange of messages between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and President Kennedy. The essence of this agreement is as follows.

The USA is giving assurances that no invasion will be inflicted on Cuba, not only on the part of the United States, but also on the part of their allies—the other countries of the Western hemisphere. The Soviet Union for its part will remove from the Cuba the missile weaponry that the President of the USA has called offensive, and will not install such types of weaponry in Cuba again.

Such is the basis of the agreement, and we are adhering to it, because it is the only possible basis now for eliminating the tense situation that has been created. The agreement is the result of a compromise reached through mutual concessions, and it satisfied both parties.

In accordance with this agreement the Soviets undertook on 28 October the dismantling of the missiles. The dismantling was completed on 2 November, and the dismantled missiles have been transported to ports for shipping. As you have already been informed, these missiles will be removed from Cuba on 7 or 8 or at the latest 10 November of this year.

Tell the Americans that if they wish to raise other issues, then they will find many such issues on our side as well, issues which really affect the vital interests of our country and which create concerns about our security. But we are not raising any of these issues at present, because they are too broad, and their resolution will take a great amount of time; moreover, these issues affect not only our two states, but the large circle of states, i. e. they belong to the category of global problems.

If the USA representatives say that President Kennedy, in his speech on 22 October speaking about offensive weaponry,

mentioned bombers in this category, then say the following:

In Cuba there are none of our bombers which could be put in the category of offensive weaponry. They do so with the IL-28 bomber. But this machine is 15 years old. The American military figures surely know very well that this was the first Soviet plane with a turboreactive engine. Fifteen years ago they indeed were rather cutting-edge machines. But now technology has made so many steps ahead that we have not only removed these machines from the arsenal of our army, but have even refused to use them as targets for the training of anti-aircraft units in the Soviet Union. These machines are soon going to be scrapped, and if we sold them to some country, it would only be for using them as training machines for pilot instruction, and to some extent as defensive means—for the coastal defense of a territory with the escort of anti-aircraft machines, and nothing more. These planes are so far from answering the current needs for speed and altitude that their use for other purposes would mean sending people to certain death. We are sure that the American military and USA intelligence understands this well.

Indicate that if the representatives of the USA insist on their demand concerning the IL-28 planes, then by doing so they will only put the USA in a position in which the whole world will see that the United States is not keeping its word, and is imposing unacceptable conditions that create the possibility of a prolongation of the conflict. At that time the whole world will understand that this is precisely the purpose behind the imposition of such conditions.

In Stevenson's letter of 3 November, another issue is raised—it asserts that according to the reports of American intelligence in Cuba, the assembling of IL-28 bombers is still going on. In response to this, say that such assertions are an invention of American intelligence, because it is impossible to see what is not there. Moreover, American photos do not corroborate this. It is clear that this false information is pursuing the aim of avoiding a settlement of the conflict and a normalization of our relations, and indeed a tightening of tensions.

As far as other sorts of weaponry are concerned which the American representatives are now trying to put in the offensive category, tell the Americans that it is neces-

sary to rigorously proceed from the agreement reached through the exchange of letters, that it is necessary for the Americans to hold to the statement of their own President. He said that he was against offensive weaponry, but in favor of the right of each side to possess defensive weaponry.

Say that in general we are not presently authorized to carry on negotiations on points that directly concern the defense interests of the Republic of Cuba. We have not been authorized by Cuba to carry on such negotiations. For this reason, if the Americans insist on this, it will only complicate the settlement.

If the Americans take as their goal a return to an incendiary situation, it will scarcely be in the interests of either the USA or the USSR, or in the interests of the world. We propose to choose reasonable positions, and to proceed in the negotiations from the agreement that has been reached. We have already fulfilled our obligations, have dismantled our missiles, have loaded them onto ships, and in the coming days, that is, not later than 10 November, all these materials will be removed from Cuba. The other side, the United States, should also carry out its obligations, and lift the blockade that has been called a "quarantine." Let us formalize this in documents with the aim that each side affirm its statements in documents, that is, let us formalize this agreement on the basis of which this dangerous moment in the history of our countries, which really could erupt in a catastrophic thermonuclear war, can be eliminated.

Say that we believe that the elimination of this especially difficult situation, and the formalization of this in documents, would serve as a good beginning in the resolution of issues that our states and indeed the whole world faces. This is the issue of disarmament, the issue of the elimination of bases, the prohibition of thermonuclear arms testing, the signing of agreements on non-aggression between Warsaw Pact and NATO countries.

Emphasize that if the USA intends to insist on discussing the issues it has raised, because the President spoke about them and because they allegedly also relate to the conditions of the agreement, then it is fitting to remind them that N.S. Khrushchev also raised other issues in his messages. Both we and the Americans know that USA missile bases are distributed throughout many coun-

tries around the Soviet Union.

For this reason, if the parties talk about what was mentioned in the course of the polemic, and it was indeed a polemic, and if each side insists on having things its own way, then it will render impossible an agreement and the elimination of the tense situation—in other words, we will return to the same incendiary situation that existed before, and that was escaped with such difficulty.

For this reason it is necessary to show understanding and respect for the sovereignty of each state, and to recognize the equal rights of all countries to self-defense.

5.XI A. G.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba A.I. Alekseev to USSR Foreign Ministry, 5 November 1962

5 November

In connection with our explanations to Fidel Castro of how the decisive moment for us did not allow time for consultation with him on the issue of dismantling, he drew his own conclusions from the exchange of messages between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy, and doubts crept into his mind as to whether we had familiarized him with all the letters.

In particular, he says that it follows from Kennedy's open message of 27 October that our decision regarding the dismantling had been communicated to Kennedy even before that date.

Before 27 October, I passed on to Castro two confidential letters from N.S. Khrushchev to President Kennedy: of 23 and 26 October.

On the basis of the correspondence I have come to the opinion that Kennedy did not yet have a basis in the message of 27 October for drawing the conclusion that we gave our consent for the dismantling before that date, and it is necessary somehow to explain this to Castro. Comrade Mikoyan has entrusted me with the task of looking into the issue raised by Castro.

In view of the necessity of sending this

telegram immediately, I have not had time to submit it to the approval of Comrade Mikoyan. The talks with Castro will take place on 5 November at 14:00 local time.

5.XI.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by J. Henriksen.]

Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko to Mikoyan and Alekseev in Havana, 5 November 1962

5 November 1962

In response to the telegram from Comrade Alekseev. In the event that it is necessary, you should explain to Fidel Castro that the readiness to dismantle the installations of the so-called "offensive weaponry" was first mentioned only in N.S. Khrushchev's message to Kennedy of 27 October.

It is obvious that some misunderstanding could arise from the fact that Kennedy's message to N.S. Khrushchev of 27 October spoke (with reference to N.S. Khrushchev's message of 26 October) of the "removal" of the weaponry from Cuba; but that was his, Kennedy's, interpretation of the issue. As N.S. Khrushchev's message of 26 October makes clearly evident, it made absolutely no reference to an agreement about the "removal" of our weaponry from Cuba.

Since N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy did not exchange any other messages or statements in those days, besides the ones familiar to our Cuban friends, Fidel Castro's doubts about whether we might have given our consent to the dismantling of the weaponry and its removal from Cuba before 27 October should disappear completely.

A. G.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA Dobrynin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 5 November 1962

5 November 1962

Today the "Washington Post" published an article by [columnist Joseph] Alsop under the title "The Soviet Plan for Deception." The article talks about Robert Kennedy's connection with [Georgi] Bolshakov¹⁹ (the latter was not named directly), and also declared in dramatic tones how that connection was used "for the deception" of the President in the issue of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba. It mentions in particular Bolshakov's reception by N. S. Khrushchev in the summer of this year, and the oral message for the President conveyed through him.

This and several other details are known in Washington only by Robert Kennedy, whom Bolshakov met with after his return from vacation (the article also mentions this meeting). For this reason it is clearly obvious that the article was prepared with the knowledge of, or even by orders from, Robert Kennedy, who is a close friend, as is the President, of Alsop.

After his first meeting with Robert Kennedy, immediately after his return from vacation, Bolshakov no longer met with him. Robert Kennedy promised him to set up a meeting with the President for passing on to him the oral message, but yet did not organize such a meeting.

5.XI.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA Dobrynin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 5 November 1962

Having familiarized himself with the text of N.S. Khrushchev's confidential letter,²⁰ Robert Kennedy said that he would pass it on to the President immediately.

Then, assuming a somewhat surprised air, he tried to represent the affair as if the Soviets, having given their consent in principle to withdraw from Cuba the arms that the Americans call offensive, thereby allegedly came close to adopting the American point of view that had been laid out in the form of the list of weaponry mentioned in the American statement about the "quaran-

tine." This, he said, was how Stevenson had "understood" V.V. Kuznetsov during their first meeting.

I answered that this interpretation of the Soviet position did not correspond to reality. A reference to the declaration cannot have for us the force of an obligation, since it is a document publicized by the USA government in a highly unilateral fashion. It is well known that the Soviets have refused to recognize this document, and thus also the list of weaponry it contains, and to which R. Kennedy is referring. For the Soviet Union, only the written agreement reached between N.S. Khrushchev and the President has the force of law, and we will fulfill the terms of that agreement if the Americans also fulfill their own obligations.

V.V. Kuznetsov also spoken about this to Stevenson. And A.I. Mikoyan spoke about it to Stevenson and McCloy during his recent talks with them, at which I was present myself.

R. Kennedy did not go any further into the details of the list itself, saying, however, that besides the missiles being removed by us, the Americans place great importance as well on the removal from Cuba of the Soviet IL-28 bombers. "We are not insisting on the recall of fighter planes, but bombers with a significant radius of action are another matter entirely." He refused to make any further statements on this subject, saying only that he would immediately pass on N.S. Khrushchev's letter to the President, who was supposed to be flying soon to the city of Boston, where he will vote in the USA congressional elections.

R. Kennedy answered that any additional demands, like the list of weaponry indicated above, render the lessening of the tensions arising around Cuba significantly more difficult to attain, and could only seriously complicate the situation.

Before R. Kennedy's departure, he expressed concern about the Cubans' firing at American planes carrying out observational flights over Cuba on the dismantling of the Soviet missiles. Such gunfire can elicit highly serious consequences, he added.

R. Kennedy was told that the flights by the American planes are a direct violation of the sovereignty of Cuba, and that this whole issue should, in all fairness, be raised not by the Americans but by the Cubans. Every sovereign state has every legal right to defend the inviolability of its borders. And

we are not authorized to carry on the discussion of this sort of issue on behalf of Cuba. Let us rather fulfill the agreement reached in the exchange of messages between the government leaders of both countries, said I to R. Kennedy. Then the situation around Cuba may be normalized. We are keeping our promise, and hope that the USA too does not renege on its own promises and impose unacceptable conditions that create the possibility of a continuation of the conflict.

R. Kennedy limited himself to the remark that they were really seriously worried by the possible consequences of the firing at American planes, and that he personally considered it necessary to say so. We then once again laid out for him our position with regard to the flights of American planes over Cuba.

With this the talks were ended, since R. Kennedy was hurrying to the White House to meet with the President.

5.XI.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from V.V. Kuznetsov to USSR Foreign Ministry, 6 November 1962

First. On 5 November we met with U Thant. We informed him of the exchange of views which had been taking place in recent days with the Americans. We informed him in particular of our proposals, communicated yesterday to McCloy, regarding the monitoring of the weaponry being removed from Cuba (the numerical data on the quantity of launch pads and missiles which was communicated to McCloy was not passed on to U Thant). We lingered in detail over the fact that the USA is asking questions which can only complicate the resolution of the whole problem, such as, for example, their attempts to broaden their definition of the weapons considered offensive by the Americans (the IL-28 bombers, and so on). We noted as well the USA refusal with regard to guarantees of the security of Cuba, explaining meanwhile, on the basis of our protocol draft, how we approximately imagine the USA obligations in this matter. We noted the negative reaction of the USA rep-

representatives to U Thant's proposal for a "UN presence" in the area of the Caribbean Sea, including on USA territory, as a measure seeking to guarantee a lasting peace in this region. We emphasized that the stubborn refusal of the USA to lift the "quarantine" does not at all contribute to the creation of a positive atmosphere for the resolution of the Cuban problem.

Second. U Thant asked a fine-tuning question with regard to our information on the USA attempts to broaden their demands for the removal of our weaponry from Cuba. He asked in whose hands—ours or the Cubans'—the IL-28 bombers can presently be found, as well as the torpedo cutters of the "Mosquito" class and the missiles on board them, missiles of the "air-surface" class, and missiles of the "surface-surface" class, of a small operational radius.

We answered U Thant that we cannot now provide information on this issue. U Thant asked us to make inquiries to Moscow, and to give him an answer "for his own personal information."

We ask that you provide us with information on this issue.

We assume that in examining this issue it would be appropriate to bear in mind that Fidel Castro, in his speech of 1 November, declared not only that Cuba possessed the "strategic weaponry" which now "the Soviet Union had decided to seize," but also that all other weaponry "is our property."

Third. U Thant asked whether there could be a disclosure, through first-hand observation, of the missiles on the vessels that will remove them from Cuba, or whether instead they would be kept in containers. General Rikhye, who was present at the talks, said, not waiting for our answer, that he had proposed that they be packed in a way appropriate for long-distance overseas shipping, with a view for the prevention of corrosion, but that they could be viewed in their outline forms from beneath the packing.

U Thant was also interested in whether all the missiles would be removed by one trip of each of the ships used for this purpose, or whether the ships would instead remove only a part of the missiles at once, returning them to Soviet ports and then sailing back to retrieve the rest. We said that all the missiles would be loaded onto the ships and ready for shipping no later than 10 November, and that consequently the issue of

a gradual removal through several trips would not arise.

Fourth. U Thant, emphasizing that he was speaking for himself personally and would not contact the Americans with regard to this issue, asked whether it would not be possible—unless, after we approve the American proposal for monitoring communicated yesterday by McCloy, the Americans accept the agreement—to entrust the monitoring to representatives of the International Red Cross, the same ones who will be conducting inspections, as is now proposed, on the Soviet vessels bound for Cuba.

We told U Thant that we would provide information on his proposal to Moscow, but that we supposed that the Soviet government had already introduced to the Americans such liberal proposals on the inspection process that they are offering the full possibility for settling the whole issue, if the other side earnestly wants such a settlement.

It appears to us that it is expedient to seek an agreement on the basis of the consent we have already given to the American proposals on the inspection process. If it is not possible to reach an agreement on this basis, examine U Thant's proposal. In such a case it may be possible, in our opinion, to agree that the International Red Cross representatives carry out inspections on vessels leaving Cuba with missiles in the same way that it has been proposed that they conduct inspections on the vessels bound for Cuba.

Fifth. U Thant stated that at each meeting with the Americans (his last meeting with them took place on 2 November) he has asked them questions about guarantees for Cuba's security and about the lifting of the "quarantine," and that he intends to continue to do so.

U Thant reacted with great interest to our information on the exchange of views with the Americans on the subject of the "UN presence" in the Caribbean Sea area. It was clear that this issue is important to him, and that he wants to reach a positive settlement of it. He asked us in particular whether we considered McCloy's negative response with regard to UN posts on USA territory to be "conclusive," or whether it was just an "initial reaction." We said that it was difficult for us to make judgments on this, but that it seemed that it was only an "initial reaction."

U Thant informed us that on 2 Novem-

ber he discussed the issue of the "UN presence" with delegates from Venezuela and Chile, as well as with representatives from the United Arab Republic, and that their reaction was generally positive.

Sixth. U Thant told us, evidently having in mind information published in today's American newspapers on a seemingly imminent meeting of the Security Council, that he considered it necessary and possible to convene the Council only after all issues have been resolved at the negotiations being conducted now.

We fully agreed with U Thant's point of view, and emphasized the inexpediency and even undesirability of convening the Security Council before the conclusion of the negotiations.

Seventh. U Thant asked whether Comrade A.I. Mikoyan intended to stop for a time in New York on his way back from Cuba, and agreed that if so he would like to meet with Comrade Mikoyan to get information on the results of his negotiations with Fidel Castro.

We answered that it was not yet clear to us whether Comrade Mikoyan would stop by New York on his way back from Cuba.

6.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet envoys in New York V.V. Kuznetsov and V.A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 6 November 1962

6 November 1962

TOP SECRET

On 5 November we had a meeting with Stevenson and McCloy at the American initiative. The Americans came to the meeting with the clear intention of exerting pressure to get further concessions from the Soviets. Throughout the duration of the whole discussion, which lasted more than three hours, they tried to represent the affair as if the Soviets had still not displayed any willingness to fulfill the obligations stipulated in the correspondence between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and President Kennedy, notably with regard to IL-28 planes and nuclear

warheads and bombs. At the same time the Americans kept shying away from a discussion of the issues concerning the Americans' fulfillment of their own obligations. The discussion at times became pointed, and this was an effect created largely by Stevenson and McCloy.

1. More than half the discussion was devoted to an exchange of opinions on the issue of the IL-28 planes located in Cuba. Stevenson and McCloy stated that the agreement between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy stipulated the removal of all these planes from Cuba, and their return to the Soviet Union. The essence of Stevenson's and McCloy's argument on this issue can be reduced to the following:

Kennedy's statement of 22 October and his proclamation of 23 October placed jet bombers in the category of the so-called "offensive" Soviet weaponry in Cuba. Kennedy's message of 27 October referred to the "offensive missile bases," as well as to "all armament systems that can be used for offensive purposes," apparently including jet bombers in this category. Comrade N.S. Khrushchev indicated in his message of 28 October that the Soviet government had issued instructions to dismantle and return to the Soviet Union the arms that "you call offensive." The Americans call both missiles as well as jet bombers offensive weaponry.

McCloy and Stevenson came back many times in the course of the talks to these arguments, interpreting them in such a way as to make it seem as though the Soviet Union had committed itself to dismantle and return to the Soviet Union from Cuba not only missiles, but also bombers.

We explained our position in detail to McCloy and Stevenson, in accordance with your instructions. We emphasized in particular that at the present time there is only one basis for an agreement, the one established by the exchange of messages between Comrades N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy. As far as Soviet obligations are concerned, that agreement stipulates that the Soviet Union will remove from Cuba the missile weaponry that the President of the USA has called "offensive," and that it will never in the future supply such weaponry to Cuba. The USA in its turn committed itself not to invade Cuba, and not to allow any invasion by the other states of the Western hemisphere. The Soviets are fulfilling to the let-

ter this agreement, which is the result of compromise and mutual concessions. On 28 October the dismantling of the missiles was begun, this dismantling was completed on 2 November, and the dismantled missiles have been brought to the ports for shipping, and will be removed no later than 10 November.

We directed the attention of the Americans to the fact that, if they want to raise new issues, then we have many issues that we will want to raise too, for example concerning the American military bases on foreign territories, but that we are not doing this because we do not want to complicate the negotiations.

We adduced concrete facts concerning the IL-28 bombers, showing that this bomber is a purely defensive weapon, long ago outmoded, and that it can be used only for coastal defense when escorted by anti-aircraft units. We said with regard to this that if the USA representatives insist on their own demands concerning the IL-28 planes, then in doing so they will only place the USA in a position in which the whole world will see that the United States are reneging on their promise, and imposing unacceptable conditions that create the possibility of a continuation of the conflict.

We said that Stevenson's assertion in his letter of 3 November, that according to the reports of American intelligence there was evidence that IL-28 bombers are still being assembled in Cuba, is a fabrication by American intelligence that clearly aims to avoid the settlement of the conflict and the normalization of our relations, and that indeed tightens the tensions. If the United States take as their goal a return to the incendiary situation of earlier, then this is scarcely in the interests of the USA or the USSR, or in the interests of peace. We propose to select reasonable positions, and to proceed in our negotiations from the agreement that has already been reached.

The Americans contested our views of the purely defensive character of the IL-28 bombers. McCloy and Stevenson asserted that "in Castro's hands" these bombers could be offensive weapons, and that for the Latin American region they represent a threatening weapon which the other Latin American countries do not possess.

In response to our statement, in accordance with your instructions, that one cannot always rely on the facts produced by

intelligence reconnaissance and that, with regard to the IL-28 bombers, the American intelligence information on the continuing assembly in Cuba of these planes is incorrect, McCloy asserted that in the photos taken by an American reconnaissance plane over the area where IL-28 planes were being stored, it was obvious that there were more of them in recent days, and that new containers of parts for these planes were being unpacked. In a half-joking tone McCloy stated that once Soviet representatives had also denied even the American intelligence photos of missile bases in Cuba. McCloy said that he himself had seen the photos of recent days in which IL-28 bombers were visible, and that he believed these photos.

We answered McCloy and Stevenson by saying that their formulation of the issue of IL-28 bombers, which were outmoded and which have been removed from the arsenal of our army, is clearly aimed at complicating the whole affair, at slowing the completion of the negotiation work, and at putting into doubt everything positive that had already been achieved at these negotiations. We returned to these opinions many times in the course of the talks. Stevenson and McCloy stated that without resolving the issue of removing the IL-28 bombers from Cuba, it would be impossible to reach any agreement.

At the end of this part of the talks, Stevenson asked whether it should be understood that the Soviets are refusing to remove the IL-28 planes from Cuba. If so, he said, then our position in the negotiations has reached "a very serious impasse." We repeated that these planes are not offensive, and that the Soviets will proceed from this fact in their actions. Isn't Mr. Stevenson already thinking of presenting us with an ultimatum on this issue and blaming the Soviets for the situation created at these negotiations?, we asked in response. He immediately said no, there was no ultimatum at all.

Stevenson said that perhaps the Soviets would think over this issue again, and that the next day or the day after that they could discuss it again. We said that we were willing to discuss any issue in these negotiations, but that as far as the issue of the IL-28 bombers was concerned, it is the Americans who should think it over, since their position on it was complicating the

negotiations.

2. Then Stevenson and McCloy asked one more question—about the nuclear warheads on the missiles, and about nuclear bombs. They asked how we proposed to give the Americans the possibility of ascertaining that our nuclear warheads and bombs had been removed from Cuba in conditions in which ground-based inspection in Cuba was impossible. We stated that the Americans' formulation of still another issue could only complicate the situation. We emphasized that the Soviets would fulfill to the letter all the obligations, stipulated in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's messages, for returning from Cuba to the Soviet Union the whole complex of weaponry that the Americans have called "offensive." McCloy stated in response to this that the USA did not want to allow "nuclear warheads to be found in Castro's hands," and wanted to be sure that there was no such weaponry in Cuba.

McCloy said moreover that, since ground-based inspection in Cuba was impossible, the Americans would want to be allowed the same possibility for checking on the removal from Cuba of the nuclear warheads that they had been allowed for checking on the removal of the missiles. "Tell us how many nuclear warheads you have in Cuba," McCloy said, "and allow us the possibility to ascertain that they have all been loaded onto your vessels."

We repeated that none of this was being put forth by the Americans in order successfully to complete the negotiations, and that the Soviets would fully and precisely fulfill their obligation to remove from Cuba the "offensive" missiles, along with everything associated with them. We have every right to expect a similarly sincere fulfillment of the American's obligations, instead of the advancement of more and more issues that complicate and delay the resolution of this urgent problem.

3. We have informed the Americans with regard to your instruction No. 2389 on the schedule of departures from Cuba of the ships carrying the missiles on 6 and 7 November. They have made no comment on this information, and have asked no questions.

4. We informed Stevenson and McCloy of our progress with regard to the establishing of inspections on the Soviet vessels bound for Cuba by representatives of the International Red Cross, about which we

also informed Narasimhan today. In spite of the fact that McCloy, in talks at his country house yesterday, was still talking about the USA's lack of objections to the use of Soviet ships for the Red Cross inspections, he stated today that he had doubts about the acceptability for the USA government of our proposal to use the Soviet freight vessel "Amata" for carrying out this inspection by the Red Cross representatives.

At this time McCloy asserted that, since the Soviets had refused to approve the use of American ships for this purpose, the Americans could scarcely agree to the use of a Soviet ship, and that it would be better to charter vessels from neutral states, such as Sweden, for example, for this purpose. Answering our questions, McCloy said that this still did not constitute a definitive response from the Americans, and that he would inform his government of our proposal.

We expressed our surprise with regard to such a change of the USA position on the issue of using Soviet vessels for the Red Cross inspections. McCloy was somewhat embarrassed by this, and repeated several times that yesterday, in talking about the likelihood of American approval for that proposal, he had been expressing only his own personal assumptions.

5. In the course of the talks, we tried several times to lead the Americans toward the issues of guarantees of Cuban security and the lifting of the "quarantine." McCloy and Stevenson did not enter into any real discussion of these issues, even less than they had before at the earlier meetings.

6. At the end of the talks, Stevenson said, as if summing things up, that for them there were still several questions, in his view, which remained either undecided or open-ended; these included questions about the removal from Cuba of the IL-28 bombers, about the granting of the possibility for the USA to be sure of the removal from Cuba of nuclear warheads and nuclear bombs, and about the search for vessels of neutral countries that would be acceptable to both parties for the Red Cross inspection of Soviet ships bound for Cuba.

McCloy told me that the day before he had told President Kennedy by telephone about our talks at McCloy's country house, that the President had given a positive evaluation of the results of the talks, and that this evaluation had been confirmed the next

morning by a telegram from Washington. In McCloy's words, President Kennedy was counting on continued progress at the negotiating table. And he added that they hoped that the Soviets would make an attentive examination of the issues that had been put forth at today's talks.

In response to McCloy and Stevenson, we said that we did not think that the questions referred to by Stevenson were open-ended any longer. Those issues are perfectly clear, and it is only the USA position that is hindering forward movement. We appealed to the Americans to operate in future negotiations on the basis of the spirit of compromise and the desire to guarantee the strengthening of peace that was displayed in the correspondence between N. S. Khrushchev and Kennedy, and to be guided by precisely that spirit when attentively reviewing the considerations we had expressed.

We ask that you inform us on the issue of the warheads.

6.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV
V. ZORIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet envoy in New York V. Kuznetsov to USSR Foreign Ministry, 7 November 1962

On 6 November we had a meeting with the Americans, with the participation on their side of Stevenson, the Deputy Minister [Secretary] of Defense [Roswell] Gilpatrick, and Ambassador [Charles] Yost (Stevenson's deputy).

The Americans asked a series of questions connected with the procedure governing the first-hand observation from their ships of our ships' removal of the missiles. They proposed the following procedure for that observation activity:

The American ships will come up close to the Soviet vessels in order to see and photograph the missiles being shipped. If conditions at sea do not permit their ships to approach so close to the Soviet vessels, then unarmed helicopters will be sent from the American ships, and the photographing will be done from them.

In order to be convinced that it is precisely missiles that are being shipped out, rather than something else, the Americans are requesting that the covers or casings be removed from certain missiles during the observation. The desire was expressed that the missiles be shipped on the decks of the ships. Gilpatrick emphasized that they did not have in mind the sort of unveiling of the missiles that would allow a disclosure of their technical characteristics.

The Americans emphasized that they considered it important to become convinced that the entire quantity of missiles that they had been informed of was being removed from Cuba.

The question was raised as to how and where a meeting could be arranged between the American ships with the Soviet vessels carrying the missiles. The Americans proposed that we inform them of the ship's numbers of all our vessels which are headed out of Cuba bearing missiles, so that the captains of the American ships from which the observations will be conducted can be able to make contact with the captains of our ships, and arrange a meeting-place with them without disturbing the itineraries of the Soviet vessels. We said that in that case it would be necessary for the captains of our vessels to have the ship's numbers of the American ships as well, in order to find out whether they should get in contact with those particular ships. Gilpatrick agreed, and proposed that the ship's numbers of the Soviet and American vessels be exchanged.

The Americans also requested to be informed of the departure schedules of the other ships carrying missiles out of Cuba after 7 November.

We believe that the American proposals for carrying out an observation of the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba are acceptable. In the event that they are approved, we ask to be immediately informed of the ship's numbers of the Soviet vessels, and of the departure schedules of the ships carrying missiles out of Cuba after 7 November, unless all the missiles will have been removed by 6 or 7 November.

7.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive; translation by John Henriksen.]

**From the Journal of V.V. Kuznetsov:
Record of Conversation with the Cuban
Representative to the UN, C. Lechuga,
7 November 1962**

On 7 November 1962 a meeting took place with the permanent Cuban representative to the UN, Lechuga.

V. V. Kuznetsov informed him that in recent days we had been discussing with the Americans a series of problems deriving from the exchange of letters between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, N.S. Khrushchev, and President Kennedy, including the issue of assurances and guarantees that Cuba would not be attacked by the USA or by the other countries neighboring Cuba.

At the present stage of the discussion, we have not yet gone so far as to work out any documents or the details of the agreement. The Americans are now trying to find pretexts for avoiding definite and concrete statements. All in all, they have not been displaying any spirit of cooperation at the negotiating table.

In the American press there are frequent statements about how the USA has apparently won a triumph in the Cuban crisis. But it is clear to anyone who is able soberly to assess the events that, thanks to the firm and peaceful policies of the Soviet Union and the peace-loving actions it has taken in the crisis period, what has really triumphed is the cause of peace, what has triumphed is reason.

Now that the first stage is over and the missiles are being shipped out of Cuba, we consider it necessary to take the following steps in the negotiations with the Americans, steps that should show whether or not the Americans really want to put an end to the crisis and to prevent a repetition of this dangerous military situation. We intend to put before the Americans the issue of how they will fulfill their obligations regarding the guarantee against an attack on Cuba.

Lechuga said that Cuba supports the Soviet Union's peace-loving policies, and that the misunderstanding which had arisen in Cuba after the first steps taken by the Soviet Union had now been completely eradicated. We knew, Lechuga said, that the Soviet government was defending the interests of peace, we were in full agreement with the goals it was pursuing, but we were not

in agreement on the formulations that had been used to do so. It must be borne in mind that the Cubans are a young nation, passionate in character. When the crisis began, the Cubans were full of determination to fight, and for this reason when the events took a different turn, the feeling arose in them that they had experienced a failure. At the same time that this crisis represented a global problem, for Cuba it was also her own problem, one which roused the whole nation, and from that communal feeling came the famous five points appearing in Fidel Castro's statement. Now, however, the Soviet government can be sure that the uncertainty which arose in the first moments of the crisis has been dispelled, and that the Cuban nation is delighted by the firmness and peace-loving actions of the Soviet Union.

Lechuga also said that he had had a meeting with the Red Cross representatives, who had raised the issue of their inspection on the open sea of the vessels entering and sailing from Cuba. They made no mention of the establishing of an inspection procedure in Cuban territory. Lechuga said that he had answered the Red Cross representatives, in provisional fashion, that it did not seem that the Cuban government would offer any objections to that, since the issue at hand did not concern Cuban territory, but rather the open sea, and since this whole affair more directly concerns the USSR and the USA.

The Red Cross representatives said that they intended to carry out their inspection operations under the aegis of the UN, and to select the inspection personnel from the citizenry of neutral countries rather than from those of the interested countries.

Lechuga stated that in the talks with the Deputy Secretary General of the UN Loutfi, the latter had told him that the period of five days, proposed by the Soviet Union as the maximum period in which the inspection of vessels could be conducted, was insufficient, since within this period the Red Cross representatives would not even be able to prepare their ships or send them into the inspection zone. Loutfi also mentioned that the USA had raised the question of the IL-28 bombers located in Cuba, and that he was interested in whether these bombers were manned by Soviet or Cuban pilots.

V.V. Kuznetsov said that our position with regard to the Red Cross inspections was

based on the correspondence between N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy. We are generally opposed to the carrying out of any inspections at all. The Soviet Union agreed to the possibility of using Red Cross observers for the duration of a very short time only to give assurances that the missiles had been removed from Cuba. Since the USA maintains that the reason for the current crisis is the existence of missiles in Cuba, then it follows that with the removal of these missiles, the reasons adduced by the USA for their actions against Cuba are also removed.

In the negotiations with the UN Secretary General, we said that it was clear that we consider all the actions taken by the USA and leading to the current crisis to be unlawful. It is from precisely that same point of view that we are now conducting negotiations. With the resolution of this problem, there should not be any infringement at all on the sovereignty of Cuba or its legal rights.

In response to the question as to whether vessels could now proceed unhindered to Cuba, Lechuga answered in the affirmative.

With regard to the "IL-28" bombers, V.V. Kuznetsov told Lechuga that the Americans had asked this question during the negotiations with us, but that we had answered that it goes beyond the negotiation parameters defined in N.S. Khrushchev's and Kennedy's letters.

The Americans also raised the issue of the continuation of reconnaissance flights over Cuba, to which we responded that we considered such flights to be a blatant violation of the sovereignty of Cuba, the norms of international law, and the principles of the UN Charter. The continuation of such flights would lead to a prolongation of tensions, and any measures taken by the Cuban government in connection with this will be justified, and all responsibility for any consequences will lie on the shoulders of the United States.

At the upcoming conference we intend to exert pressure on them with regard to the guarantees of non-aggression against Cuba. And as far as the five points put forth in Fidel Castro's statement are concerned, we support them, including the point about Guantanamo, and we are taking this into account in the negotiations with the Americans.

In conclusion V.V. Kuznetsov said that an analysis of the events and of the steps

that we took in the crisis period shows that definite positive results have been attained, that we have definite assurances of non-aggression against Cuba, and that the issue now is how the USA will fulfill its obligations. It is impossible to forget that the whole world is currently watching how the events connected with the Cuban crisis are unfolding.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

**Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister
A. Gromyko to A.I. Mikoyan via the
Soviet Embassy in Havana,
10 November 1962**

First. Inform our Cuban friends that Moscow agrees with their remarks on the Protocol draft on the elimination of tensions associated with Cuba. The text of the Protocol statement, including the remarks by our Cuban comrades contained in it, has been sent by us to Comrade Kuznetsov in New York for him to relay to the Cuban representative, the USA representatives, and U Thant.

Second. We agree with the thoughts you expressed to our Cuban comrades regarding the inexpediency of making a special statement on the refusal of inspections in Cuban territory of the dismantling and removal of "offensive weaponry." We are also in agreement on your explanations concerning the Cubans' second proposal—on the UN presence in the countries of the Caribbean.

We understand that our Cuban comrades have agreed with these ideas of yours.

Third. With regard to the fact that McCloy and Stevenson, in the talks with you in New York, referred to possible difficulties they might have in signing the Protocol statement, and that they expressed support for fixing the obligations that have been undertaken in the form of separate statements, the following instructions are given to Comrade Kuznetsov:

"If the Americans declare that the signing of the protocol statement is difficult for them because of the fact that the USA and Cuba are supposed to be signing the same document, then you may tell the Americans

that we allow the possibility that the the protocol statement be not formally signed, but affirmed by special separate statements by the governments of the three countries—the USSR, the USA, and Cuba. All these documents in their collectivity will constitute an agreement.

As a last resort you may even go so far as to propose that the document not be formally called a protocol statement, but rather a declaration, which would be affirmed by special separate statements from the three governments.

We will inform you of final instructions concerning the form of the document after this issue has been submitted to the approval of our Cuban friends. Meanwhile, you and the Cuban representative will introduce it as a protocol draft."

In the next meeting with our Cuban comrades, you should clarify their views on this proposal of ours. We request that you inform us immediately of what you find out, so that we can give corresponding instructions to Comrade Kuznetsov.

10.XI A. G.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive; translation by John Henriksen.]

**Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to
the USA A. F. Dobrynin to USSR
Foreign Ministry, 12 November 1962**

Your instructions have been carried out. Robert Kennedy has familiarized himself attentively with the content of N.S. Khrushchev's confidential oral message to the President. When he got to the place that spoke of Nixon's defeat in the elections,²¹ he immediately grinned, saying: "Your chairman is a real master of colorful expression that expressed the true essence of the issue. Yes, we are quite satisfied with Nixon's defeat, and in general we are not complaining about the results of the election." It was felt that this portion of the message was received with definite satisfaction.

When Robert Kennedy had familiarized himself with the whole message, he said that for the President, for domestic policy considerations, it was very important to receive the Soviet Union's firm agreement to the removal of the IL-28 planes, especially

now that there were essentially no inspections being conducted in Cuba itself. The correspondence between N.S. Khrushchev and President Kennedy of 27 and 28 October implied that an agreement between our countries had been reached. But we understand the difficulties in this area that have now arisen because of Premier Fidel Castro's position, and we are not insisting on this as an unalterable and fundamental condition. But the removal of the IL-28 planes—in an atmosphere of growing criticism within the USA—is a matter of great concern to the President. Let us reach an agreement, continued Robert Kennedy, on the following points: that the Soviet Union will remove its IL-28 planes by a definite date announced in advance, and that on that same day the USA will officially lift its quarantine. All this may be announced immediately.

I answered Robert Kennedy that his proposal is entirely unacceptable for the Soviet side. I then demonstrated the unacceptability of this proposal by using the argument contained in N.S. Khrushchev's oral message that had been passed on to him. In conclusion I expressed my certainty that conveying his proposal to Moscow would prove fruitless.

Thinking a moment, Robert Kennedy said that he would like to confer with his brother the President, after which he would again contact me later the same day. I agreed.

After an hour and a half (all this happened in the evening), Robert Kennedy came to my residence. He said that now, after speaking with the President, he could formulate the American proposal in the following way:

N.S. Khrushchev and the President would reach an essential agreement that the IL-28 planes would be removed by a definite date. After such an agreement has been reached, the USA would, as early as the next day, lift any quarantine even before the removal of the planes had been completed. The Americans would of course prefer that the date agreed upon for the removal of the IL-28 planes be publicized. However, if the Soviets have any objections to the public disclosure of that date, then the President would not insist on it. For him a promise from N.S. Khrushchev would be entirely sufficient. As far as the date is concerned, it would be good if the planes were removed,

let us say, within 30 days. We ask that N.S. Khrushchev be informed of this whole proposal.

Robert Kennedy was told that the President's proposal would of course be communicated to N.S. Khrushchev. As a personal opinion, however, I noted that it was unlikely that such an imminent date could be acceptable to us, all the more so since the fundamental USA obligations—guarantees of non-aggression against Cuba, and other obligations—remain, as before, unfulfilled; moreover, they themselves are pushing everything later and later. And this is happening in circumstances in which the Soviet government is sincerely fulfilling, and essentially has already fulfilled, its own obligations for the removal of the missiles. It is now the Americans' turn.

Robert Kennedy said that the time-frame he had referred to—30 days—is not in any way definitive. That time-frame had been "given to him," but he thought that there was room for negotiation here as long as the period was not too great, and as long as N. S. Khrushchev generally found the President's proposal acceptable. I want now to make note of one more condition, Robert Kennedy continued. After such an agreement has been reached, especially if it is not publicized, it would be important for us that, even if the end of the agreed-upon period for the removal of the IL-28 planes has not yet been reached, at least some planes will have been disassembled by this time, or if they have just been taken out of containers, that a portion of them be returned to their containers. We need all of this, Robert Kennedy remarked, so that we can satisfy our domestic public opinion by reporting that there has been some progress in the removal of the IL-28 planes. This is necessary, since even [West German Chancellor Konrad] Adenauer is starting now to criticize us publicly for trusting the word of the Soviet Union without inspections in Cuban territory—not to mention the Cuban emigres in certain republics [states—ed.] who are making similar accusations. But the President, Robert Kennedy emphasized, has faith in N. S. Khrushchev's word, and is willing to lift the quarantine immediately if the agreement mentioned above can be reached, even though we really do not have any guarantees with regard to inspections in Cuban territory.

I answered Robert Kennedy that it

would be much better if Adenauer kept his nose out of everyone else's business, and if the USA government told him so directly (here Robert Kennedy energetically nodded his head in a gesture of agreement). I then said that in the proposal that he had advanced, the issue is once again raised of a full elimination of all the tension that has existed, that is, beyond the immediate lifting of the blockade, the obligations of all the parties should be fixed in appropriate UN documents, and non-aggression against Cuba and a strict observation of its sovereignty should be guaranteed; there would also be UN posts established in the countries of the Caribbean region as guarantees against unexpected actions harming another state.

Robert Kennedy said that he believed that an agreement could be reached on all this points. It is important, from the point of view of American public opinion, to have some inspection conducted in Cuba, even in the form of several UN posts. Castro will scarcely go for this unless a similar procedure is imposed on the other countries of the Caribbean basin. But is possible to resolve this too. Robert Kennedy mentioned, as an alternative to this, the plan put forth by Brazil, but then he immediately said that this aspect of the issue was being studied by Stevenson, and that he, Robert Kennedy, could not go into details with regard to it. I can however repeat the firm assurances of the President not to invade Cuba. He authorized me once again to say this now. He was grateful to N.S. Khrushchev for the latter's clarification that the IL-28 planes are manned by Soviet rather than Cuban pilots, but nevertheless the issue of the removal of these planes remains a very important one for the President, and he asks that we consider his proposal.

Further discussion came down to a reiteration of the positions of the parties. Robert Kennedy said in conclusion that he was flying now to New York on personal business, and that he would be willing to meet with me at any time.

When he left, he glimpsed a crowd of dancing couples in the embassy's parlor. Realizing that this was a friendly welcome party arranged by the embassy community for the Bolshoi Theater troupe that had just arrived in Washington, he said that he would like to meet with the troupe. Mingling with and greeting almost all the members of the

troupe, he delivered a welcome speech in which he said that the President was preparing to attend their premier the following evening. At the end, he kissed Maya Plisetskaya when he found out that he and she had been born in the same year, month, and day, and said they would celebrate their birthdays in a week. None of this needs to be mentioned especially, but all in all the behavior of Robert Kennedy, who is ordinarily quite a reserved and glum man, reflects to some degree the calmer and more normal mood in the White House after the tense days that shook Washington, even though this fact is concealed in various ways by American propaganda.

12.XI.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWHIP, and on file at National Security Archive; trans. J. Henriksen.]

Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA A.F. Dobrynin to USSR Foreign Ministry, 14 November 1962

Having familiarized himself with our response, Robert Kennedy said that he would pass it on to the President today. Then, saying that he would like to express a little of his own views provisionally, Robert Kennedy stated the following.

The President—he, Robert Kennedy, expects—will be disappointed by the answer when he receives it. The President's proposal was very simple: the USA would immediately and officially lift the blockade in exchange for assurances—public or not—that before some definite date the IL-28 planes would be removed. The President believes that this proposal of his serves the interests of both countries, and opens the way towards a resolution of the remaining aspects of the Cuban problem, creating a significantly less tense situation than the one that would arise if his proposal was approved by the Soviets. The President intends to fulfill his obligations, which were stipulated by the correspondence between the heads of the two governments. But for this there must be a certain time in which all the details of the future agreement can be worked out. The President's proposal referred to above could be carried out immediately, without any delay. The insistence of the USA government in this matter of the

IL-28 planes has been provoked by the growing pressure that has been brought to bear on the President by representatives of Congress, the press, and so on. It is important that this aspect be properly understood in Moscow, since the President himself has great difficulties in dealing with this issue (Robert Kennedy twice emphasized the "difficulties for the President").

I carried on the discussion with Robert Kennedy of these difficulties using the arguments advanced by N.S. Khrushchev's response. It was especially emphasized that we have removed from Cuba the missiles and warheads, in other words that we have fulfilled the obligations we assumed, while the USA is not fulfilling its own obligations; for this reason, in order to conduct assurance inspections after the missiles and warheads have been removed, the quarantine should have already been lifted by now, the flights by American planes over the territory of Cuba should have already ceased, and the mutual obligations assumed by the parties should have been formalized in appropriate documents under the auspices of the UN.

Robert Kennedy stated that the USA government would not cease its flights over Cuba in circumstances in which he had no other guarantees that the government of Cuba would carry out its end of the agreement. Mr. Mikoyan's long stay in Cuba shows—or at least this conviction has been created in us—that Premier Castro does not want to approve the agreement reached between the President and the head of the Soviet government on such guarantees. We understand the circumstances that have been created, but this does not relieve the difficulties of our position, said Robert Kennedy. The issue of UN guarantees, in the form of UN posts or something like them, would require a significant amount of time before concrete approval of the agreement could be reached. Let us take for example the issue of UN posts in the area of the Caribbean basin. Here Robert Kennedy asked, would the Soviet Union itself really agree to some foreign posts on its own territory? As far as we know, in every such case it has categorically rejected, and still rejects, the idea of observational posts within its borders.

Robert Kennedy was immediately told that evidently he had not been sufficiently familiarized with N.S. Khrushchev's re-

sponse, which spoke, as did his preceding message to the President, of how it seems that our countries must in the first place come back in their disarmament negotiations to the Soviet proposals that stipulated posts in airports, in the major ports, at railroad hubs, and on motorways in order to guarantee for all countries of the world that no country can assemble troops and prepare for attack on or invasion of another country.

Robert Kennedy corrected himself, confirming that such a proposal was indeed to be found in N.S. Khrushchev's responses. By the way, the remark I made has no direct connection to the subject presently under discussion, the subject from which I digressed, he continued. As far as I am aware, there are no unsurmountable obstacles on this point, although for us it seems a highly complicated issue to organize UN posts in the parts of the USA bordering the Caribbean Sea, if that agreement with Cuba is indeed reached. However, just yesterday at a White House meeting I heard that far from all the countries of this area would agree to participate in such an agreement. Thus if you insist on all the countries of the Caribbean area, the whole affair might be delayed even longer. I am saying all this, Robert Kennedy concluded, not in order to discuss the details of this issues—I do not know them myself, since they are the responsibility of Stevenson and Kuznetsov—but rather to show that time is needed for all this, and that it would scarcely be expedient or reasonable to wait for it before lifting the quarantine and removing the IL-28 planes. The President has put forth a proposal that he believes serves the interests of both parties, but that proposal is being rejected now by the Soviets, which can lead only to an extension, or perhaps even a complication, of the present situation which clearly does not satisfy us or, we believe, you. Both parties are equally uninterested in that. We hope nonetheless that Chairman N.S. Khrushchev will be able to approve the proposal put forth by the President, who himself had great confidence in it when he sent it to Khrushchev.

I told Robert Kennedy that the position of the Soviet government has been clearly laid out in today's response by N.S. Khrushchev. The Soviet Union has fulfilled its obligations. Now it is simply the USA government's turn to do the same, so that the situation of tension that has been cre-

ated in the Caribbean Sea can be eased. For this it is necessary: to lift the quarantine without delay, to cease all flights by USA planes over Cuba, and to fix the mutual obligations deriving from the correspondence between the heads of both governments on 27 and 28 October. If corresponding instructions were given by the President to McCloy and Stevenson on the issue of UN posts in the Caribbean Sea area and the parts of the USA that border it—and the Soviet representatives already have such instructions—and if they could reach an agreement, then of course the issue of the time-frame for the removal of the IL-28 planes would not be any complex problem.

Since Robert Kennedy, who often refers to the President's opinion, has been stubbornly continuing to assert the necessity of first resolving the issue of the IL-28 planes' removal, connecting the lifting of the quarantine with that removal, he was directly asked, after mutually reiterating our arguments to each other, whether this meant that the President had already authorized him to give an answer, and that such an answer should be communicated to Moscow?

Robert Kennedy immediately answered that the views he had been expressing, although based on the opinions of the President, with whom he had just that evening discussed all these issues, are nonetheless exclusively his own, Robert Kennedy's, personal thoughts, and that there would be an answer to N.S. Khrushchev's address today from the President himself. Robert Kennedy promised to provide information on that answer immediately.

Towards the end, the conversation started to have a formalized and official air connected with the President's invitation, passed on to me via Robert Kennedy, to visit the White House on the following day along with the Bolshoi Theater troupe.

14.XI.62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive; translation by John Henriksen.]

**Telegram from Soviet Foreign Minister
A. Gromyko to A.I. Mikoyan,
15 November 1962**

In connection with the last paragraph

of Comrade Kuznetsov's telegram (relayed by you separately), which says that the Americans are insisting that their guarantees of non-aggression against Cuba be made simultaneously with the Soviet Union's promise not to bring any more "offensive" weaponry into Cuba, we have sent the following instructions to Comrade Kuznetsov:

In your memorandum you said that that the Americans are persistently pushing for the simultaneous granting of USA guarantees for non-aggression against Cuba and of Soviet guarantees not to bring "offensive" weaponry into Cuba any longer.

From such a formulation of this issue on the part of the USA it can be deduced that they are trying to impose on the Soviet Union and Cuba additional obligations which would basically mean that, besides the sorts of weaponry agreed upon by the correspondence between Comrade N. S. Khrushchev and President Kennedy, Cuba would be deprived of the right to possess any other sorts of weaponry that the USA might call "offensive." The acceptance of such obligations would discriminate against Cuba, since in that case it would be singled out from among the other countries of Latin America that do not bear such obligations. This cannot be acceptable.

Another matter concerns the talk of concluding the agreement through the UN, for example by way of the approval of an appropriate UN resolution stipulating that the territory of all Latin American countries be declared a zone that is free from nuclear arms. Of course the design behind this is to put Cuba on equal footing with the other countries of Latin America; and also the USA, as far as Guantanamo and its other bases in Latin America are concerned, would take onto its shoulders the obligation not to allow any provisioning of nuclear weapons onto the territories of any Latin American country. This would establish an equitable basis for an agreement, and would be acceptable.

With such a formulation of this issue, there would be no discrimination with regard to any participants in the agreement, in this case with regard to Cuba; that is, the issue would be resolved differently than as proposed in the draft resolution put before the UN General Assembly by Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile.

If the Americans continue to insist that

there be simultaneous guarantees by them for non-aggression against Cuba, referred to in Kennedy's messages of 27 and 28 October, and guarantees by us no longer to bring "offensive" weaponry into Cuba, you must proceed from the point that we are willing to make a guarantee not to bring into Cuba the sort of weapons that we agreed to remove from Cuba following the agreement reached by correspondence between the heads of our two governments. In accordance with this, Article 8 of the draft Protocol may be supplemented with the following paragraph:

"At the same time the Soviet government states that it will not bring such weaponry onto the territory of the Republic of Cuba."

This formulation, which refers to "such weaponry," does not give the Americans the chance to broadly and arbitrarily interpret the term "offensive" weaponry to include other sorts of weaponry (including nuclear arms) that the Americans might classify as offensive.

You must submit the position laid out above to the approval of the UN delegate from Cuba. In this we are proceeding from the assumption that our point of view will be acceptable for Cuba, since it derives from the position jointly held by the Soviet Union and Cuba on this matter.

Telegraph upon completion.

A.G.

[Source: AVP RF, Moscow; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

**Telegram from Soviet Foreign Minister
A.A. Gromyko to A.I. Mikoyan,
18 November 1962**

I am transmitting instructions from the Authorities.

If our Cuban friends address you in reference to their decision on firing at American planes, then they should be told the following:

In view of the fact that decision on firing at American planes was not submitted to our approval, we do not consider it possible to take part in this. For this reason, we have given instructions to our military men

not to open fire on American planes.

A. GROMYKO

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Memorandum from the Head of the USSR Merchant Fleet to the CC CPSU, 20 November 1962

I am reporting on the situation on the USSR-Cuban sea lanes.

At the present time, there are 20 dry-cargo ships and 4 oil-carriers on their way to Cuba from Soviet ports on the Baltic, the Black Sea, and in the Far East, carrying industrial and agricultural equipment, automobiles, metal, grain, flour, conserves, sulfates, oil, gas, ammonia, and other loads. Besides this, the tanker the "Tukmus" is nearing Cuba, sailing out of the Canadian port of Montreal with a cargo of animal fat. Four of the vessels mentioned are passing through the zone of the blockade imposed by the USA. The others will reach this zone between 20 and 30 November.

There are 13 dry-cargo vessels and 7 tankers en route from Cuba to Soviet ports. They have all successfully passed through the blockade zone.

The Soviet vessels bound for Cuba are being subjected to overhead flights by USA Navy airplanes during their whole passage across the Atlantic Ocean. Within the blockade zone these flights occur more frequently, aerial photos are taken, American ships come up close to them, inquiring what cargo is being carried and where, and then they follow close behind the Soviet ships until they reach the territorial waters of Cuba. Demands concerning the stopping of the ships or the carrying out of inspections by American naval ships are not forthcoming.

The Minister of the Merchant Fleet
(V. BAKAEV)

[Source: Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), Moscow; copy provided to CWIHP by R. Pikhov and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

Cable from Mikoyan to CC CPSU, 23 November 1962

CC CPSU

During yesterday's conversation with Fidel Castro and others, when I spoke of the significance of the new success in liquidating the crisis and of the cancellation of both our and the American measures of extraordinary preparedness, Fidel Castro said, that they are, moreover, also preparing to carry out demobilization.

23.XI.62 A. MIKOYAN

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by David Wolff, CWIHP.]

A.I. Mikoyan, Memorandum of Conversation with Robert F. Kennedy, 30 November 1962

[...] On the evening of 30 November, A.I. Mikoyan was present at a dinner in honor of the American Secretary of the Interior [Stewart] Udall. The guests included R. Kennedy, Deputy Secretary of State [George] Ball, the chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors [Walter] Heller, the chairman of the Board of Directors of the "New York Times" [Orville] Dryfoos, and the Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin.

All the American guests were with their wives, except for Robert Kennedy who came with his eldest daughter, age 13. He has seven children in all. He said that his wife, together with the other six [children], who had the flu, had gone to Florida to bring them up to [good] condition.

Before dinner, Robert Kennedy, after conversations of a protocol-like nature in the presence of all, asked A.I. Mikoyan to step into another room, where one on one (Dobrynin) [they] first touched on the matter of one Zaslavskii (a Soviet citizen), who married an American tourist, but our court annulled the marriage. He [Kennedy] said that he is embarrassed to present this matter officially, since it has no bearing on the relations between our governments. But for the Minister of Justice [Attorney General] the resolution of this question is important.

The question is small, but delicate, and its resolution would be greeted with satisfaction.

Then he touched on the major questions for which they had left the company - the significance of yesterday's conversations with President Kennedy and the need for contacts between Khrushchev and Kennedy and mutual actions.

The President, said R. Kennedy, considers yesterday's conversation extremely useful, promoting further mutual comprehension between our governments and their heads. In this respect, this meeting can be characterized as definite progress. Such is the opinion of the president himself.

What is most important now?, continued R. Kennedy. The most important, even more important than the fates of my children and your grandchildren, although they, of course, are the nearest and dearest to us, is the question of mutual understanding between Chairman Khrushchev and President Kennedy. Indeed, it now decides the fate of the world. One must admit that in the course of the recent crisis, their personal relations and mutual trust underwent serious trials, as a result of which, frankly speaking, damage was sustained. Therefore, it is very important to do everything to restore fully the trust on which so much depends. We ourselves understand the need for this, for we must look ahead. We, concluded R. Kennedy, sincerely hope that the development of our relations can follow a happier course than in the past.

A.I. Mikoyan replied to R. Kennedy that he fully agrees with the idea of the importance for preserving peace and for the basic improvement of relations between our countries of good personal relations between N.S. Khrushchev and president Kennedy, their mutual understanding and trust of one another. As one of N.S. Khrushchev's comrades-in-arms [*soratnik*], said A.I. Mikoyan, I can assure you that exactly these thoughts define his approach to his relations with the USA president. N.S. Khrushchev values the personal quality of these relations. The Soviet government renders its due to the self-possession [*otdaet dolzhnoe vyderzhke*] exhibited by the president in the most dangerous moment, when the world stood at the edge of thermonuclear war, but by mutual concessions and compromises, succeeded in averting this war.

Moscow, continued A.I. Mikoyan, no-

ticed the positive role you, the president's brother, played during the confidential negotiations between the president and the head of the Soviet state. Of course, we understand, that you did this, as did we, in the interests of one's own country, one's own people. It was important, however, that you understood correctly, in the critical moment, what those interests were. Let us now complete the outlined resolution to the Cuban question, without complicating it with trivial formal cavils [*melochnaia pridirka*], or even worse, some deviation from the agreement on the final settlement of this question. Indeed, if one speaks the truth, there's not much left to do; it is only necessary to put in writing or to finalize, without excessive procrastination that which the American side obligated itself to do during the exchange of messages between N.S. Khrushchev and the president.

R. Kennedy noted that he agreed that little of essence remained to be done - indeed, "it's 90 percent done," although there are still difficulties that must be overcome. But he, R. Kennedy, did not intend to analyze these difficulties. They were the subject of detailed discussion in New York. He only wanted to emphasize briefly that with which he began: the importance of further developing mutual understanding between the president and N.S. Khrushchev. This will determine to a large extent the success and solution of other questions that still await settlement.

A.I. Mikoyan agreed with this. Returning to his conversation with the president, A.I. Mikoyan said, that although in its course there were a few sharp [*ostryi*] moments, on the whole he agrees with R. Kennedy's evaluation of the conversation with the president.

To all appearances, this was reflected in the ensuing conversation with Rusk, which took place in a business-like and friendly atmosphere, clearly, not without the influence of the president. R. Kennedy smiled, but he didn't say anything.

In concluding the conversation, R. Kennedy asked [Mikoyan] to give greetings to N.S. Khrushchev. In his turn A.I. Mikoyan sent greetings to the president.

Robert Kennedy showed interest in visiting the Soviet Union and expressed this desire.

A.I. Mikoyan said that this was a good idea and completely realizable. If the de-

crease in tension between [our] countries continues further and the political atmosphere warms up, then this trip would not only be interesting but useful for him.

After our return to the other room, Udall made the first toast to the leaders of the two great nations - N.S. Khrushchev and J. Kennedy - "people of strength and peace." One theme of the toasts and remarks of the American representatives during the meal was to express satisfaction over the fact that our two countries have succeeded in avoiding a clash in the Cuban crisis and [to support] the need to search for ways of avoiding the repetition of similar crises in the future. Note the following pronouncements.

Udall emphasized the pleasant impressions from his trip to the Soviet Union and from his meeting with N.S. Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders. He said that his feelings of sympathy for the Soviet people grew stronger, and he said so despite criticism of these statements in the USA, still in September. He asked [me] to transmit his invitation to visit the United States to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Comrade Novikov, and to the Energy and Electrification Minister, Comrade Neporozhnyi, noting in jest that he was ready to show "some secrets," as was done during his visit to the Soviet side.

A.I. Mikoyan pronounced a toast to the host, Secretary Udall, his wife and children, who were presented to A.I. Mikoyan by their parents. Udall has 6 children.

A.I. Mikoyan joked that although Khrushchev's acquaintance with Udall was brief, and Mikoyan's acquaintance with Udall at the time even briefer, Udall immediately won over Khrushchev and then Mikoyan. Khrushchev said to Mikoyan: What a simpatico [*simpaticnyi*] and good man is Mr. Udall!

When I met him at dinner, said Mikoyan, he made such an impression on me. There are some people, whom you know for years, but actually don't know, and suddenly after decades you see the real face of the man. And there are also those, who after several hours, you can tell what kind of man they are. Udall belongs to this category. When he returned to his homeland after visiting the Soviet Union he landed in an atmosphere of anti-Soviet hysteria. The agents of monopolies, the press and radio tried to get anti-Soviet statements out of him, counter to those he had made in the Soviet

Union. Udall's conscientiousness [*dobrosovestnost'*] was confirmed and he did not give in to this pressure and said what he thought, that is, he repeated in the USA what he had said in the Soviet Union.

A.I. Mikoyan transmitted greetings from N.S. Khrushchev and offered a toast to [Khrushchev's] health.

Ball underlined that the necessary condition for greater trust between the USSR and USA was our renunciation of "the practices [of] a closed society," stating, in particular, that this should be demonstrated concretely by the broadening of exchanges and in our agreement to the sale of bourgeois newspapers on the streets of Moscow.

Replying to Ball, A.I. Mikoyan said, that so long as the arms race continues, it is impossible and unrealistic to demand the open society of which Ball spoke. You also do not have an open society. You have more advertising [*reklam*], but society is closed, but in its own way. When the arms race is eliminated and disarmament takes place, we will then open many places in which the presence today of foreigners is forbidden. Then we will have open exchanges and contacts.

Wishing to draw Heller, the Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, into the conversation (he appears pleasant, a relatively young professor, for the most part silent), A.I. Mikoyan asked Heller how he would explain the fact that, in particular, the USA has more steel producing potential than the USSR, but the USSR in the third quarter of this year produced more steel than the USA. "If you did not need so much steel, why build so many factories and remove huge amounts of capital from circulation, including the living work force [that has become] unemployed. In general, what measures are you taking to remove such disproportions and are they removable at all in a free enterprise system?"

Heller avoided answering by changing the topic of conversation, not wishing to enter an argument where he felt himself weak. A.I. Mikoyan in the context of the dinner did not insist on an answer.

Heller promptly supported Mikoyan's statement on the appropriateness of transferring power and means freed up by the end of the arms race toward raising the standard of living of the people from underdeveloped countries and of the people of the states participating in the arms race.

A.I. Mikoyan invited Heller to visit the Soviet Union.

Those present asked Mikoyan if, in his opinion, Castro is interested in normalizing relations and about Castro himself as the ruler of Cuba.

A.I. Mikoyan in his statements about his trip to Cuba underlined Cuba's interest in having the chance to build a [word illegible] life in a peaceful setting, and the lack of any serious signs of readiness on the part of the USA to normalize [relations] with Cuba.

Dobrynin and Bubnov transcribed the conversation.

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive; translated by David Wolff, CWIHP.]

**Memorandum from the Head of the
USSR Merchant Fleet to the CC CPSU,
7 December 1962**

I am reporting on the removal of 42 IL-28 planes from Cuba.

1. The ship "Okhotsk," carrying 12 IL-28 airplanes, left the port at Nuevita on 4 December at 23:00 Moscow time.

After the departure of the "Okhotsk" from the port, American planes began flying back and forth over the ship, taking photos. We recorded the identification numbers of the planes.

On 6 December at 9:00, the USA warship number 943 appeared near the stern of the "Okhotsk," and informed the captain of our vessel that it would be following the "Okhotsk" all night, and asked that the boxes containing the IL-28 planes be opened for photographing. The captain gave his consent, and towards dawn on 7 December the USA destroyer carried out an inspection of the Soviet ship.

2. The "Kasimov" left the port of Mariel at 14:45 on 5 December, carrying on board 15 IL-28 planes.

The "Kasimov" was also subjected to constant overhead flights by USA war planes whose identification numbers we recorded.

A bomber of the "Neptune" class, with the number 6-145922, asked us to open the packing of our deck cargo for photographing. This request was fulfilled by the captain of the "Kasimov." After this, the plane

circled over the vessel six times and then flew away.

3. The ship "Krasnograd" left from the port of Mariel on 6 December at 7:30, carrying on board 15 IL-28 planes.

This vessel was also constantly subjected to overhead flights by American planes whose numbers were recorded by us. One plane of the "Orion" class, number 5605-BF-505, and two planes of the "Neptune" class, numbers LK-131499 and JP-22, asked the captain how many IL-28 planes he was carrying. The captain answered that there were 15 "IL-28" planes on board.

The flights over vessels carrying IL-28's continue. The vessels are proceeding normally.

All the planes, 42 units, have been removed. According to the Ministry of Defense, a forty-third plane (an instructional model) was wrongly registered, and had never been received by Cuba.

The Minister of the Merchant Fleet
V. BAKAEV

[Source: Russian State Economic Archives, Moscow; copy provided to CWIHP by R. Pikhov and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

**Official note from the US embassy in
Moscow to USSR Foreign Ministry,
10 December 1962**

Received by mail
10 December 1962

Translated from the English
No. 478

The Embassy of the United States of America is expressing its respect to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and has the honor of quoting from the Embassy's note No. 348 of 24 October 1962. The Embassy has been entrusted by its government hereby to bring to the attention of the Ministry the operational portion of the Proclamation, issued by the President of the United States of America on 21 November 1962, on the lifting of the quarantine announced on 23 October 1962.

"I, John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, acting with the

authority given to me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, hereby declare that at 23 hours 00 minutes Greenwich time on 20 November 1962, I rescinded the powers given to the Defense Department by Proclamation No. 3504 of 23 October 1962, and cancelled the orders it contained to the armed forces under my command."

The Embassy of the United States of
America

Moscow, 10 December 1962
Translated by Ju. Sokolikov

[Source: AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK (Japanese Television), provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University.]

EDITOR'S NOTES

¹ Gromyko here evidently refers to Dorticos' speech to the U.N. General Assembly of 8 October 1962. Dorticos stated: "Were the United States able to give us proof, by word and deed, that it would not carry out aggression against our country, then, we declare solemnly before you here and now, our weapons would be unnecessary and our army redundant." *New York Times*, 9 October 1962.

² Kennedy had asked Congress to approve the call-up of 150,000 reservists on 7 September 1962.

³ Not further identified.

⁴ An obvious allusion to the failed attack on Cuba in April 1961 at the Bay of Pigs by CIA-supported anti-Castro Cuban exiles.

⁵ The date of this conversation is not specified in the text, but Kennedy appears to be referring to the meeting between Robert Kennedy and Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin on the same day as the 4 September 1962 statement to underline the President's concerns about Soviet military aid to Cuba.

⁶ The Russian text is unclear as to whether it refers to a "bar-man" (barkeeper) or a last name such as "Berman," "Barman," or "Burman."

⁷ Possibly a reference to journalist Robert J. Donovan.

⁸ It is noteworthy that the Soviet message strongly implies that a U.S. invasion of Cuba would not trigger a military response from the USSR, but only political condemnation. This hinted at a brewing disagreement between Moscow and Ha-

vana, for Castro's message to Khrushchev on 26 October 1962—in which he called on the Soviet leader to authorize a “harsh and terrible” attack on the United States should it invade Cuba—clearly reflected the Cuban's belief that Moscow was (or should be) willing to go to war on Cuba's behalf. For an English translation of Castro's letter, which first appeared in the Cuban newspaper *Granma* in November 1990, see James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon, 1993), 481-482.

⁹ Presumably a reference to Khrushchev's letters on that day to both Kennedy (accepting his proposal to resolve the crisis) and Castro (explaining his decision); for the texts of both letters, see Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, eds., *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: The New Press, 1993), 226-229, 239.

¹⁰ A secessionist rebel leader from Katanga (later Shaba) Province in the Congo (later Zaire) against whom the UN was considering the use of military force, which it later used to quash the resistance.

¹¹ For an English translation of the letter, which emerged publicly only three decades later when it was released by Soviet officials, see *Problems of Communism—Special Edition* (Spring 1992), 60-62; also U.S. State Department, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, vol. VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1996), 189-90.

¹² A reference to Kennedy's agreement to withdraw the approximately 5,000 U.S. troops sent to Thailand in May 1962 in response to an attack by the pro-communist Pathet Lao in Laos. Kennedy's decision followed a private appeal in Khrushchev's name conveyed through Robert Kennedy in mid-June by Bolshakov. See Memorandum from Attorney General Kennedy to President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), 11 July 1962 (regarding meetings apparently held on 18 and 19 June 1962), in U.S. State Department, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, vol. XXIII: Southeast Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1994), 950.

¹³ Igor D. Statsenko was the commander of a Soviet missile division deployed to western Cuba.

¹⁴ Alekseev evidently refers to Khrushchev's letter to Castro dated 30 October 1962; an English translation can be found in an appendix to Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba on the Brink*, 485-488.

¹⁵ Castro here refers to his message to Khrushchev dated 26 October 1962, an English

translation of which appears in an appendix to Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba on the Brink*, 481-482.

¹⁶ A reference to anti-U.S. protests held outside the embassy in Moscow during the crisis.

¹⁷ Evidently a reference to the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, which Kennedy created.

¹⁸ For English translations of the Russian records of conversations in Havana between Mikoyan and Castro and the Cuban leadership on 3-5 November 1962, see Vladislav Zubok, “‘Dismayed by the Actions of the Soviet Union’: Mikoyan's talks with Fidel Castro and the Cuban leadership, November 1962” (plus accompanying documents), *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 59, 89-92 and 109, 159.

¹⁹ Until the missile crisis, Georgi Bolshakov, a Soviet official based at the USSR Embassy in Washington, had been used as a back-channel go-between to deliver messages between Khrushchev and the Kennedys, meeting frequently with Robert Kennedy. As the document indicates, this channel ended after the Kennedys concluded that Bolshakov had been used to mislead them by transmitting false reassurances in the summer and early autumn of 1962 that Khrushchev would not send offensive weapons to Cuba or take any disruptive action prior to the Congressional elections in November. Instead, beginning with the missile crisis, a new channel was set up between Robert Kennedy and Ambassador Dobrynin.

²⁰ For Khrushchev's 4 November 1962 letter to Kennedy, see Chang and Kornbluh, eds., *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*, 264.

²¹ Nixon had been defeated by his Democratic rival in the California gubernatorial elections, upon which he announced his retirement from politics. The relevant passage in Khrushchev's 12 November 1962 message read: “Now the elections in your country, Mr. President, are over. You made a statement that you were very pleased with the results of these elections. They, the elections, indeed, were in your favor. The success does not upset us either—though that is of course your internal affair. You managed to pin your political rival, Mr. Nixon, to the mat. This did not draw tears from our eyes either....” See James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 290.

STATE DEPARTMENT, RUSSIAN ARCHIVES COOPERATE ON KHRUSHCHEV-KENNEDY FRUS VOLUME

In an unprecedented example of cooperation between the State Department Historian's Office and the Russian Foreign Ministry archives, a volume of *Foreign Relations of the United States*, the official published record of U.S. foreign policy, has appeared with Russian archival documents.

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, Volume VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), contains several Russian documents among the correspondence, oral messages, back-channel exchanges, and other records concerning direct communications between U.S. President John F. Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev, including exchanges between the two concerning the Cuban Missile Crisis in Oct.-Nov. 1962 that were declassified by Russian authorities five years ago and published in Spring 1992 in *Problems of Communism*.

One newly-available document from the Russian archives contained in the volume is a translation of a long (approximately 25 type-written pages) 1 April 1963 “talking paper” from Khrushchev to Kennedy. Upon reading through the message when it was presented to him by Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin, the president's brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, handed it back on the grounds that it was “so insulting and rude to the President and to the United States that I would neither accept it nor transmit its message.” Robert Kennedy told his brother that he had informed an “obviously embarrassed” Dobrynin that a message of that sort, if Khrushchev insisted on sending it, should go through normal State Department channels rather than the confidential back-channel Dobrynin and Robert Kennedy had established during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Thus, no copy of the communication reached the U.S. archives.

FRUS editors called the cooperation with the archives of an ex-Cold War adversary “without precedent in the history of the *Foreign Relations* series,” and expressed thanks to Igor V. Lebedev, Director of the Department of History and Records, Russian Foreign Ministry. The Kennedy-Khrushchev volume (320 pp.), prepared by the Office of the Historian, Department of State, is ISBN 0-16-04018-0 and can be ordered from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop: SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328.

MIKOYAN-CASTRO TALKS*continued from page 320*

by the Russian and transcribes the meaning of the phrase into the simple past tense. Both documents are evidently transcriptions of memo notes taken during a speech and do not seem to have been corrected. Their overall tone is colloquial. When the meaning was clear enough, I changed the punctuation and divided very long sentences into shorter ones. I did not shorten the phrases whose meaning was unclear. In this latter case, I tried to be as literal as possible; translating word by word. Editor's and translator's insertions appear in brackets, as opposed to parenthetical phrases in the original document. The translation preserves some apparent errors in the originals regarding parentheses and quotation marks, where the punctuation marks are not closed. In general, however, the sense of both documents is understandable even to a reader who is unfamiliar with the events.—Carlos Osorio (National Security Archive).]

**Document I:
Cuban Record of Conversation,
Mikoyan and Cuban Leadership,
Havana, 4 November 1962**

MEETING OF THE SECRETARIAT OF
THE CRI WITH MIKOYAN AT THE
NATIONAL PALACE,
SUNDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 1962.

Preamble by Mikoyan:

He says he has come to Cuba to discuss their differences with the Cuban Compañeros [comrades] and not to [discuss] what has been stated by the imperialists. They trust us as much as they trust themselves. He is willing to discuss for as long as it takes to solve the differences. The interests of the Soviet Union are common to ours in the defense of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and in all the other interests.

FIDEL: Summarizes our differences in terms of the procedures used to deal with this crisis.

DORTICOS: Asks whether Mikoyan considers that they have obtained the guarantees that president Kennedy offered.

CARLOS: Asks whether the victory mentioned by the Soviets has been attained.

MIKOYAN: Says he will respond to the questions, and asks to be excused for he will speak for a long time. He says he will start with the doubts expressed by Fidel in order to explain them.

He thinks that the main problem consists in explaining why they have sent troops and strategic weapons. If this is not understood, it is very difficult to understand the whole situation. He did not think we had doubts about this. He said that “the fate of the Cuban revolution is a permanent preoccupation of ours, especially since its socialist character was declared. When the imperialists were defeated in Giron [Beach at the Bay of Pigs—ed.], we congratulated ourselves, but we also worried. The *yanquis* [Yankees, i.e., North Americans—ed.] did a stupid thing but we knew they would continue harassing because Cuba is an example that they could not tolerate. Our assessment was that they had two parallel plans; the first one consisted of the economic strangulation of Cuba in order to bring down the regime without a military intervention. The second one consisted of an intervention organized by Latin American governments and their support, as an alternative to the other plan.

We consider the victory of the Cuban revolution as an enormous contribution to Marxism-Leninism. Its defeat would be an irreparable damage to Marxism and to other revolutionary movements in other countries. Such a defeat would mean the preponderance of imperialism over socialism in the world. Such a defeat would mean a terrible blow against the world revolution. It would break the correlation of forces. It is our duty to do everything possible to defend Cuba.

“Our comrades told us that the economic situation in Cuba had worsened due to the *yanquis*' pressure and the enormous military expenses. This worried us for it coincided with the plans of the *yanquis*. We had a discussion about the economic decline and we have helped without you requesting it. You are very modest in your requests and we try to help you. We decided to give you weapons for free and donated equipment for 100,000 men. In addition, in our commercial negotiations, we have looked at all the possibilities and we have tried to provide everything you needed without payments in

kind. We have given you 180 million roubles in order to help you. This is a second phase of help because before that there were commercial and credit agreements but these last deliveries have been in aid.

When Khrushchev visited Bulgaria [on 14-20 May 1962—ed.] he expressed many things to us, he said “although I was in Bulgaria, I was always thinking of Cuba. I fear the *yanquis* will attack Cuba, directly or indirectly, and imagine of the effect on us of the defeat of the Cuban revolution. We cannot allow this to happen. Although the plan is very risky for us, it is a big responsibility for it exposes us to a war. Cuba must be saved[.] “They thought it over for three days and later all the members of the Central Committee expressed their opinions. We have to think a lot about this action in order to save Cuba and not to provoke a nuclear war. He ordered the military to develop the Plan and to consult with the Cubans. He told us that the main condition was to carry out the Plan secretly. Our military told us that four months were needed for the preparations. We thought the enemy would learn about it right in the middle of the plan and we anticipated what to do. We thought the plan would not be carried out to the end, but this was an advantage, for the troops would already be in the Island. We foresaw that, in order not to provoke a war, we could use the UNO [United Nations Organization] and the public opinion. We thought the Plan would not provoke a war but a blockade against weapons and fuel instead. How to solve this - your lack of fuel? Considering the geographic situation of the Island, it has been very difficult to avoid the blockade. If you were closer we could have used our Air Force and our Fleet, but we could not. The *yanquis* do have bases surrounding us in Turkey and blocking the Black Sea. Given the situation, we cannot strike back. Okinawa is too far away too. The only possibility was to cut the communications with West Berlin. In Berlin this is possible.

We have not thought of building a Soviet Base on the Island to operate against the North Americans. In general, we consider that the policy of bases is not a correct one. We only have bases in [East] Germany, first because of the right we have as an invading country, and after that due to the Warsaw Treaty. (Stalin did have bases abroad). In the past, we have had them in Finland and in China too (Port Arthur) -

those bases we have abandoned. We only have troops in Hungary and Poland, to protect the troops in Germany and the communications with Austria.

We do not need bases to destroy the United States because we can attack with the missiles deployed in our territory. We do not have a plan to conquer North America. The only thing we need to do is to launch a counter strike, but that will serve to destroy them without having to send in our troops.

We have sent the troops and strategic missiles only to protect the Island's defense. It was a plan of containment [*contension*] so that the *yanquis* could not provoke an explosion in Cuba. If the missiles are well camouflaged and the *yanquis* do not know where they are deployed, then they can help to contain them. The military told us that they could be well hidden in the palm forests of Cuba. The *yanquis* were not going to locate them. They could not destroy them. During July and August, they did not find anything, it was not until October that they have been found. We were surprised that Kennedy only made reference to technicians and not to our troops. At first, it seems that that is what he thought. Later we learned that he knew more than he was saying, but he was not revealing it not to hinder the electoral campaign. We let the *yanquis* know that we were going to solve the Berlin problem, in order to distract their attention from the other problem. We did not intend to act on Berlin. I can explain this later.

It was known through diplomatic channels that Kennedy did not want to make matters more serious and asked us not to move on the issue of Berlin before the elections. We told him that we agreed to this. We would please him and we would solve it later. We thought it was convenient to please him. In addition, we had not thought of bringing up this problem. When the North Americans learned about the transports to Cuba, they also concentrated their campaign on Berlin. Both sides had their principal interest in Cuba, but appeared as if concentrated on Berlin. In the middle of October, they [the North Americans—ed.] learned about it through Cuba, via the West Germany information service who passed it to the CIA,³ they first learned about the missiles. They took aerial pictures and located them. Khrushchev ordered that the missiles be laid down during the day and that they

be raised only during the night. Evidently, this order was never carried out. Kennedy did not want to talk about the missiles until the end of the elections. But two Republican Senators learned the news and they had no alternative but to act. We did not know what Kennedy would do and we worried about the preparations or maneuvers of Vieti - an operation named after Castro but backwards.⁴ When Kennedy talked about the blockade, we did not have data showing whether it was a maneuver or a preparation for aggression. On the morning of the 28th we received the news confirming that it was an aggression. Although it was announced that the maneuvers were suspended due to a storm, the storm was over and the maneuvers were not carried out. In the meantime, the concentration continued. Khrushchev has strongly criticized Kennedy's words about the blockade. They did not approve of the kind of weapons that Cuba should own and thus they organized a direct aggression. Their plan consisted of two parts: using missiles with conventional loads to destroy the nuclear missiles and then landing and destroying the resistance.

In case of the latter, we would be forced to respond because it is an attack against Cuba and against us too - because our troops were here and this was the unleashing of the World War. We would destroy North America. They would inflict huge losses on us; but they would make every effort to destroy Cuba completely. All the measures we took were taken to protect Cuba. What would have been the result if the plan of the *yanquis* was carried out? Lose Cuba, inflict enormous damages upon the Socialist countries with a nuclear war? While we were in the midst of our discussions, we received a cable from Fidel that coincided with other information in the same vein. After that, ten to twelve hours were left. Given that such a short time was left, we used diplomatic channels. Because when policy-makers want to avoid a war, they have to use diplomatic means. It's important to underscore that Kennedy says now that he was not against the presence of troops here and that he accepts ground-to-air missiles. But once known, the strategic weapons, were not useful anymore...(paragraph missing) [notation in original—ed.]

The withdrawal of the missiles, was a concession on our part. But Kennedy also makes a concession by permitting the So-

viet weapons [to remain in Cuba], in addition, declaring that they will not attack Cuba nor permit that it be attacked. In assessing the outcome, we have gained, because they will not attack Cuba and there will be no war.

In normal conditions, it would be natural that we send you a project [draft—ed.] for you to study and you could then publish it. But that can be done only in normal conditions. An invasion was expected within the next 24 hours. When Fidel sent his cable, there were only ten to twelve hours left. If a cable was sent it had to be crypted, that would take more than 10 to 12 hours. Consultations would have been appropriate, but Cuba would not exist and the world would be enveloped in a war. After the attack, they would have never accepted a truce, due to the warmongers of the Pentagon. Our attitude has produced difficulties, but in making an overall evaluation, in spite of the psychological defects, we can see that the advantages are undeniable.

Com[panero]. Dorticos asks: What guarantees offered by Kennedy have really been obtained? We consider that all agreements cannot be rejected in a nihilistic fashion. Although agreements can be breached, they are important for they are useful for a certain period of time.

In addition, a problem arose with the Turkey issue. [Mikoyan said:] Why did we include the problem of Turkey and the bases? We did not have in our plans to discuss Turkey; but while we were discussing that issue, we received an article from [U.S. journalist Walter] Lip[p]man[n] saying that the Russians will discuss that, [and] that is why we included it. The bases in Turkey are of no importance because in case of war they would be destroyed. There are also bases in England that could damage all the bases anywhere in the world.

Fidel asks whether there were in fact two letters [from Khrushchev to Kennedy], one that mentioned the issue of Turkey, which was broadcast on Radio Moscow, and another in which the issue was not mentioned. [Mikoyan replied:] We sent two letters, one on the 26th that was not published, and another one on the 27th. The issue of Turkey was not included at the beginning, we included it later. But we can describe all that in more detail through a reviewing of

the documents. We have had discussions about your question whether the dismantling of the base at Guantanamo is better. That would be better for Cuba, but from a military point of view of the interest of Cuba, it is not possible. If we decided to withdraw all the weapons from Cuba, then we could demand the withdrawal from Guantanamo, Guantanamo has no importance in military terms. That would be more dangerous, and that is important from a political perspective. Concerning the inspection: if we said we reject any inspection, the enemy could interpret that as an attempt to trick them. All it is about is seeing the sites, where the weapons were and their shipping for a few days. Cuba is in the hands of the Cubans. But because we were the owners of those weapons... (paragraph missing). [notation in original—ed.] We thought that you, after the consultations, you would accept the inspection. But we never thought of deciding anything for you. Why did we think that we could accept a verification of the dismantling by neutrals, without infringement of the Cuban sovereignty? It was understood that no State would accept an infringement of your sovereignty. In very particular cases, a State can... [ellipsis in document—ed.] its acts, by agreement and not due to pressures from abroad - the territory of the Embassy within a sovereign State for example. When discussing the problem of Indochina and Vietnam in Geneva [in 1954], an agreement was reached to create an International Control Commission.

We spoke about the problem of dismantling with [U.S. negotiator John J.] McCloy in New York. He said that "given that Cuba is opposed to the North American inspection, he did not insist on this formula - for them to verify that the weapons will not be kept hidden in the forest. [no close quotation marks in original—ed.]

I talked to them about the aerial photographic inspection, but I responded that Cuba has the right to its air space. I told them that their planes have flown over Cuba and they were convinced that the dismantling is been carried out. They admitted that, but pointed that not everything is finished. We told them that this is nearly completed and he did not talk further about it. [McCloy said:] We have to be sure that they are not

going to hide them in the forest. We do not want data pertaining to your military secrets; but we need assurances that the missiles will go.

We can provide the pictures of the dismantled weapons and how they are loaded. Nor we will oppose that you observe the ships on the high seas, at a particular distance. They (or you) will see something on the decks. I did not tell them that, but that is our opinion and we will provide them with the materials to convince them that we have withdrawn the missiles. So we will not contradict your [Cuban] declaration, against the inspection or the aerial verification. They feared that the Cubans would not allow us to withdraw the missiles, given that they have 140,000 and you only have 10,000 men. I did not talk about these numbers. He said that the U-2 that was shot down here, was shot at with Russian missiles and probably operated by Russians. Although they think there may be Cubans who are able to operate those weapons. We kept on insisting that they lift the quarantine immediately. I told them that if they wanted the missiles withdrawn faster, they should lift the blockade. Because the ships that are now in Cuba are not able to take those missiles out. [underlined in original]. I told them they should issue instructions so that the inspection of the ships be carried out without anybody boarding the ships. It would rather be carried out in a symbolic manner, asking by radio, as it was done with the tanker Bucharest.

Stevenson said they will accept the proposals of U Thant. We reproached him that he proposed not to bring weapons to Cuba and to lift the blockade. We have complied with this and they continue.

We have losses because the ships wait on the high seas. The losses are considerable, that is why we have allowed the control of the Red Cross. The Red Cross is better because it is not a political institution, nor a governmental institution. U Thant proposed two inspections, one at the shipping harbors and another on the high seas. Not wanting to hurt his feelings, we responded that we accept the inspection on the high seas and not at the shipping harbors.

U Thant, when returning from Cuba, told me that you did not agree, although this verification is easier at the harbors. U Thant is ready, he is choosing the personnel and has already two ships. I do not know more

about it, for it is [Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V.V.] Kuznetsov who deals with this issue.

In this situation, Thant has played a good role. You cannot ask more, given his situation, he even seems to have a little sympathy for our position. While in Moscow, we received a plan of guarantees. We thought this plan seemed interesting and useful for Cuba.

Why: If the inspection of Cuba, the southern coast of the U.S. and other countries in the Caribbean will be approved (Central America[]) because this way you deprive the aggressor of the possibility to carry out its goals. Of course, this can be circumvented, however. I have been interested in this variant from another point of view. There is an OAS [Organization of American States], and it is the U.S. who profits from it instead of using the UN. But if this plan is approved, it is the UNO that will deal with this part of the American Continent, this constitutes a blow to the Monroe Doctrine. U Thant said that the representatives from Latin American countries agree with this plan, the North Americans avoid responding to it. I asked Mc Cloy and he said at the beginning (as did Stevenson) that the U Thant Plan does not exist. But afterward they discarded the U.S. inspection and they said they can give their word that in Latin America all the camps [of anti-Castro Cuban exiles—ed.] are liquidated. I asked him if all were, and he avoided the question. They said that Cuba was a revolutionary infection, he said that the Latin American countries fear Cuba. A formula can be searched in which Cuba will abandon the clandestine work in exchange for their not attacking.

Fidel was right when he said that it's easier for the USSR to maneuver and maintain a flexible policy than it is for Cuba, all the more as the *yanqui* radio reaches Cuba easily. It is not just to say that we are more liberal. The Cuban revolution cannot be lost. You have to maneuver to save the Revolution by being flexible.

In retrospect the question that arises is whether it was a mistake to send the missiles and then withdraw them from the Island. Our Central Committee says that this is not a mistake. We consider that the missiles did their job by making Cuba the focus of the world diplomacy. After they were captured in photos, they cannot accomplish

their role of containment.

In Latin America no country has the power that Cuba has. No Latin American bloc can defeat Cuba.

In order to understand on what victory rests, you may compare the situation of Cuba now and four months ago (in July). The first advantage is that the North Americans stopped talking about the Monroe Doctrine and before, the whole basis for their policy toward Latin America was that doctrine.

Before, they declared they would not tolerate the existence of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Latin America, now they declare that they will not attack Cuba. Before they did not tolerate a country from abroad in the Caribbean and now they know of the existence of Soviet specialists and do not say a thing.

Before, you could not have any action of the UN in favor of Cuba and now it is working in that sense, all the peoples are mobilized.

The prestige of the Socialist Camp has grown because it defended peace. Although the United States brought the world to the brink of a war, the USSR, by pacific means, was able to save Cuba and the [world] peace.

Peace has been secured for several years and Cuba must be consolidated for it to continue building socialism and continue being the Light-house for Latin America.

The prestige of Cuba has grown as a consequence of these events.

Fidel asks whether he [Mikoyan] will speak about the Soviet policy in Berlin. Mikoyan agrees to do so in a later interview.

**Document II:
Mikoyan and Cuban leadership,
Havana, 5 November 1962**

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE
SECRETARIAT AND MIKOYAN ON
MONDAY, 5 NOVEMBER AT THREE
IN THE AFTERNOON.

After hearing Mikoyan, Fidel says:

We consider that the intentions of the Soviet Government cannot be determined only by the analysis of what happened in face of

an unforeseen situation. Instead, they should be analyzed taking into account the set of agreements we have reached - the weapons were brought under those precepts. One of them is the military agreement that was to be published once all the weapons were brought in and once the Elections were held in the United States. These agreements represent a firm desire of the Soviet Union.⁵

That is why this has to be analyzed under the light of what we intended to do and not under the light of what happened.

If all the steps were carried out, we have no doubt that they would have served as a containment to the plans of the North Americans to attack our country. And the objectives of the Soviet Government and Cuba would have been attained.

At the same time, we knew that the deployment of missiles in Cuba had in sight the defense of the Socialist Camp. They were important not only in military terms, but also from a psychological and political point of view. Besides serving the interests of Cuba, they served the interests of the Socialist Camp as a whole, and we evidently agreed with that. That is how we have understood the step taken, and we also understand it was a step in the right direction. We also agree with the need that a war be avoided and we do not oppose that. In this case, all the measures oriented to attain the two objectives were undertaken. We are in absolute agreement with the goals sought by the Soviet Union, the misunderstandings arise as a result of the way they were attained. We also understand that the circumstances were compelling. They were not one hundred percent normal.

In assessing how the events occurred, we think they could have been dealt with differently. For instance, one thing discussed is the impact that my letter had on the Soviet Government's decision of the [October] 28th. And it is evident that my letter had nothing to do with the course of the events - given the messages that were exchanged between the Soviet and North American Governments on the 26 and 27. My letter's only goal was to inform the Soviet Government of the imminent attack, and it did not contain any hesitation on our part. Furthermore, we expressed that we did not expect an invasion. We expressed that the invasion was possible, but we understood that it was the least probable variant. The most probable event was an aerial attack to destroy the stra-

tegic weapons.

The Soviet Government's decision on the 28, is based on the letter to Kennedy and the response on the 27. The real basis for the 28 decision lies within these two documents. Kennedy's letter on the 28 was an agreement to the proposals Khrushchev sent on the 26 - in the sense that he [Khrushchev] was willing to resolve the issue of all the weapons if the U.S. ceased the aggression. The aggression was the only reason for the military strengthening of Cuba.

Once Kennedy accepted this proposal - which we did not know of - the conditions were set to carry it out starting with a declaration by the Soviets stating that their side was on board and that they would proceed to discuss it with the Cuban Government.

I think that such a declaration, instead of communicating an order to withdraw the Strategic Weapons, would have decreased the tension and would have allowed to carry the discussions in better terms.

But this is a mere analysis of what happened, it does not matter now. What matters now is simply to know what to do and how to attain the main goals that are to stop the aggression and to secure the peace at the same time. If a true and effective peace are attained in the near future, then - under the light of the recent events - we will be able to judge better the steps taken. The future outcome - for which we need to struggle - will either credit or discredit the value of the acts of the present. It is evident that attaining that outcome does not depend so much on us. We are very grateful for all the explanations given and of the effort made for us to understand the things that occurred. We know they happened in abnormal circumstances. There is no question in our minds about the respect of the Soviet Union toward us, the respect of the Soviet Union for our sovereignty, and, the help of the Soviet Union. That is why what is important to discuss is what are the steps to take in the future. We want to reaffirm our trust in the Soviet Union.

COMMENTS OF MIKOYAN (transcribed by Dorticos)

Carlos Rafael: It is my understanding that companero Mikoyan talked about the inspection of the Soviet ships as a Minimum Minimorum. But that inspection would take place in a Cuban harbor. They could well

then request the inspection of other sites in Cuba - the forests for instance. They can claim that the missiles could have been diverted from their route between the base and the ships.

FIDEL: How would the inspection they propose take place?

Mikoyan: (transcribed by Dorticos)

FIDEL: Couldn't they do the same on the high seas? What is the difference?

Mikoyan: (transcribed by Dorticos)

FIDEL: Tell companero Mikoyan that I understand very well the interest of keeping U Thant on our side, but for us, that is a critical issue. It would have a disastrous effect on our people. The North Americans say that the inspection is inferred from the letter from Khrushchev to Kennedy on the 28 (Fidel is making reference to the letter of Khrushchev on the 27 where he accepts the inspection of the Missiles Bases by officials of the UNO Security Council, but making reference to Cuba and Turkey agreeing to it). [note in original—ed.]

Just because of this phrase of Khrushchev, they cannot take this as a concession of the Soviet Union. Companero Mikoyan says to hell with imperialists if they demand more. But on the 23 we received a letter [from Khrushchev] saying, to hell with the imperialists...(he reads paragraphs from the letter). Besides, on one occasion we heard of the proposal of U Thant about the inspection in Cuba, the United States, Guatemala, etc., we understand, that concessions should be made, but we have already made too many. The [U.S.] airplanes are taking pictures because the Soviet Union asked so. We have to find a way to provide evidence without inspection. WE DO NOT THINK OF ALLOWING THE INSPECTION, BUT WE DO NOT WANT TO ENDANGER WORLD PEACE, NOR THE SOVIET FORCES THAT ARE IN CUBA. WE WOULD RATHER FREE THE SOVIET UNION OF THE COMMITMENTS IT HAS [MADE] WITH US AND RESIST WITH OUR OWN FORCES WHATEVER THE FUTURE BRINGS. WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO ENDANGER THE PEACE OF THE WORLD, BUT WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO RESIST AGGRESSION. [capi-

tals in original-ed.]

DORTICOS: What has been expressed by companero Fidel does not require a later discussion among us, for we all agree on this criteria (the companeros respond affirmatively)

MIKOYAN (Transcribed by Dorticos)

FIDEL: From our conversation yesterday, we had concluded that the Soviet Government understood the reasons we had to reject the inspection. That was a fundamental issue. That should have been the common ground to talk about common actions. If we do not agree on this, it is difficult to talk about future plans. That is the fundamental political issue. The North Americans persist in obtaining a political victory. The issue of the inspection is to affront the Cuban Revolution. They know there are no missiles. The verification on the high seas has the same effect as in the harbors. The only difference is the humiliating imposition that the U.S. Government wants to carry out for political reasons.

MIKOYAN: (transcribed by Dorticos)

[Source: *Institute of History, Cuba, obtained and provided by Philip Brenner (American University); translation from Spanish by Carlos Osorio (National Security Archive).*]

EDITOR'S NOTES

¹ See Vladislav M. Zubok, "Dismayed by the Actions of the Soviet Union": Mikoyan's talks with Fidel Castro and the Cuban leadership, November 1962," *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 59, 89-92, and "Mikoyan's Mission to Havana: Cuban-Soviet Negotiations, November 1962," *ibid.*, 93-109, 159; for the November 4 conversation, see 94-101, and for the November 5 (afternoon) conversation, see 101-4.

² Cuban officials took part in several oral history conferences on the Cuban Missile Crisis which also involved former U.S. and Soviet policymakers, including a conference in Moscow in January 1989 and a gathering in Havana exactly three years later in which Fidel Castro played an active role. The principal organizer of the conferences was James G. Blight, Thomas J. Watson Institute of International Studies, Brown University. For more on Cuban participation in such gatherings, see James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn,

and David A. Welch, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon, 1993), *passim*. Blight and the Watson Institute, in cooperation with the National Security Archive, a non-governmental research institute and declassified documents repository based at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., are also involved in organizing oral history conferences on the Bay of Pigs events of 1961, as well as efforts to obtain Cuban sources on such events as the U.S.-Cuban negotiations on normalization of 1975 and Cuban interventions in Africa in the 1970s.

³ The reference to the West German role in revealing the existence of the missiles to the U.S. administration is obscure, as no such link is present in most historical accounts of the American discovery. Soviet officials may have been inferring a West German role from the presence in Washington on October 16-17 of the Federal Republic of Germany's foreign minister, Dr. Gerhard Schroeder, for meetings with senior American officials, though there is no indication that he brought any intelligence data concerning Soviet missiles in Cuba. See, e.g., Dino A. Brugioni, *Eyeball to Eyeball: The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Random House, rev. ed. [1992?]), 206, 252.

⁴ A reference to U.S. Marine exercises, code-named PHIBRIGLEX-62, scheduled to begin on 15 October 1962, practicing amphibious landings of 7,500 Marines on the Caribbean island of Viecques to overthrow a mythical dictator known as "Ortsac"—a fact which was leaked to the press in an obvious psychological warfare tactic. The exercises themselves were also planned to mask preparations for a possible U.S. Navy blockade of Cuba. See citations in James G. Hershberg, "Before 'The Missiles of October': Did Kennedy Plan a Military Strike Against Cuba?" in James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992), 254-5, 275-6 (fns 87, 88).

⁵ For the text of the draft agreement, translated from a copy in the Russian archives, see Gen. Anatoli I. Gribkov and Gen. William Y. Smith, *Operation ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago: edition q, inc., 1994), 185-8.

**FOR IMPORTANT
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BOBBY AND THE CRISIS*continued from page 274*

shine through clearly, obviously also representing that of his brother. “The President felt himself deceived, and deceived intentionally,” Dobrynin quoted Robert Kennedy as saying, noting that he had arrived at the Russian Embassy in “in an obviously excited condition” (although he later “cooled down a bit and spoke in calmer tones”). In general, while Dobrynin resolutely defended Moscow against Robert Kennedy’s accusations, the lengthy account of the meeting that he transmitted to the Foreign Ministry must certainly have alerted the Kremlin leadership to just how personally affronted the Kennedy brothers were, and to their apparent determination to confront Soviet ships heading for the blockade line around Cuba.⁴

Quite aside from the substance of the meeting, in terms of subsequent developments it is worth noting Dobrynin’s own astute bureaucratic reflex in promoting his own stature in the negotiations—forging this new direct path to the president via his brother (side-stepping normal State Department

channels), the Soviet envoy concluded by recommending that he could meet again with Robert Kennedy to pass “in confidential form N.S. Khrushchev’s thoughts on this matter, concerning not only the issues which R. Kennedy had touched on, but a wider circle of issues in light of the events which are going on now.” Dobrynin may have sensed an opening in the fact that the previous Soviet Embassy official who had served as Khrushchev’s back-channel to Robert Kennedy and thence his brother, Georgi Bolshakov (ostensibly a press attache, presumably an intelligence officer), was evidently in acute disfavor in the White House for having been used to deliver a personal assurance from the Soviet leader that only defensive weapons were being shipped to Cuba. (And, in fact, Dobrynin would report shortly after the crisis that a Joseph Alsop column in the *Washington Post* exposing Bolshakov’s role in deceiving the president must have been instigated by Robert Kennedy, for it contained details known “only” by him: “For this reason it is clearly obvious that the article was prepared with the knowledge of, or even by orders from, Robert Kennedy, who is a close friend, as is

the President, of Alsop.”⁵)

Before stepping more deeply into Bolshakov’s shoes with his October 27 meeting with Robert Kennedy, Dobrynin hinted at his view of the president’s brother in a cable of October 25 lumping him, along with Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, and “military men” as taking the “most militant line” in discussions at the White House in favor of attacking Cuba, not only destroying the Soviet missile sites but also invading the island. (Supposedly taking a more moderate line, the envoy reported, were Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Treasury Secretary Douglas C. Dillon.) While Robert Kennedy at the very outset of the crisis had made some belligerent statements (even floating the idea of staging a provocation at Guantanamo to justify U.S. military action⁶), and would later join those harshly criticizing U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Adlai Stevenson for suggesting the idea of giving up American bases in Turkey and Guantanamo to convince the Soviets to remove their missiles, for most of the crisis he consistently, and at times passionately, argued against precipitous military action: “Robert Kennedy was a dove from the start,” wrote Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., citing in particular the notes of the October 18 ExComm meeting, which paraphrase RFK’s use of the Pearl Harbor analogy: “...He thought it would be very, very difficult indeed for the President if the decision were to be for an air strike, with all the memory of Pearl Harbor and with all the implications this would have for us in whatever world there would be afterward. For 175 years we had not been that kind of country. A sneak attack was not in our traditions. Thousands of Cubans would be killed without warning, and a lot of Russians too....” Robert Kennedy advocated “action,” but also leaving Moscow “some room for maneuver to pull back from their overextended position in Cuba.”⁷ As of October 25, however, Dobrynin not only grouped Robert Kennedy with the hawks on the ExComm, he judged that the president, “vacillating right now” and “heeding the [militant] group, particularly, his

JFK LIBRARY RELEASES REMAINING TAPES FROM CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

The John F. Kennedy Library in Boston announced in October 1996 that it had completed the declassification of, and was releasing, the remaining tapes of the White House “Excomm” (Executive Committee) discussions that took place in the Oval Office and Cabinet Room during the Cuban Missile Crisis between 18 and 29 October 1962. While extracts of ExComm discussions on the first and last days of the crisis (16 and 27 October 1962) had been declassified and released in the mid-late 1980s, the bulk of the tapes had remained inaccessible until now, although some limited releases of other tape-recorded Excomm materials related to the crisis took place in 1994.

The newly-released tapes total 15 hours and 19 minutes (27 minutes remained classified), making it the larg-

est single release of tape-recorded materials from the Kennedy Administration. In most cases, the Library released only tapes rather than transcripts of the discussions; however, a project is underway at Harvard University to produce transcripts of the tape recordings, after sound enhancement, leading to the publication of a collection (entitled *The Kennedy Tapes*), to be co-edited by Profs. Ernest R. May and Philip Zelikow.

In addition, the Library simultaneously announced the release of 20,000 declassified pages of Cuba-related documents from the National Security Files of the Kennedy Administration. For further information of all the above materials, contact Stephanie Fawcett, Kennedy Library, Columbia Point, Boston, MA 02125; (617) 929-4500 (tel.); (617) 929-4538 (fax); stfawcett@kennedy.nara.gov (e-mail).

brother,” might “undertake such an adventurist step as an invasion of Cuba.”

Dobrynin’s rather negative view of Robert Kennedy—even in retrospect, the jaunty Soviet diplomat recalled him as as “far from being a sociable person and lack[ing] a proper sense of humor...[m]oreover, he was impulsive and excitable”⁸—make all the more remarkable the meeting of minds that managed to take place on the evening of October 27. It is not necessary to dwell on that conversation given the scrutiny it has received (and the publication of Dobrynin’s record in a previous *Bulletin*), other than to note that Kennedy’s own contemporaneous draft memorandum of the meeting, printed below, offers additional evidence as to how sensitive the agreement on the Turkish Jupiters was considered. Even in this “top secret” memo to Secretary of State Rusk, Kennedy appears to have penciled out a sentence noting that “per [Rusk’s] instructions” he had told Dobrynin that the Turkish missile issue “could be resolved satisfactorily” in “four or five months.” Instead, in a blatant falsification of the historical record, the revised memo would leave unmodified the assertion that RFK had affirmed that it was “completely impossible for NATO to take such a step under the present threatening position of the Soviet Union” and “there could be no deal of any kind” regarding the Jupiters.

Robert Kennedy’s abhorrence of the idea of leaving a written trace of the under-the-table “understanding” on the Turkish missiles emerges even more clearly from Dobrynin’s account, printed in this *Bulletin*, of his 30 October 1962 meeting at which the Attorney General insisted on handing back to Dobrynin a letter from Khrushchev to Kennedy which had explicitly affirmed the private deal.⁹ Robert Kennedy, for his part, had no compunctions about confirming, repeatedly, that a private oral “understanding” existed between the Soviet and U.S. leaderships on the dismantling of the Jupiter missiles in Turkey “within the period of time indicated earlier,” i.e., 4-5 months. However, he added, such a sensitive understanding could not be put down

on paper, even in confidential correspondence between heads of state: “Speaking in all candor, I myself, for example, do not want to risk getting involved in the transmission of this sort of letter, since who knows where and when such letters can surface or be somehow published—not now, but in the future—and any changes in the course of events are possible. The appearance of such a document could cause irreparable harm to my political career in the future. This is why we request that you take this letter back.” (Sensing how crucial the matter was to the Americans, Dobrynin accepted the letter back, even without orders from Moscow.)

Dobrynin’s cable lends contemporaneous corroboration to the assertion in his 1995 memoirs that Robert Kennedy, even in 1962, had linked his actions in the missile crisis to his own political future in keeping secret the arrangement on the Jupiters.¹⁰ (Of course, after the assassination of his brother in 1963, Robert F. Kennedy would indeed run for president, challenging incumbent President Lyndon B. Johnson (and then Vice-President Hubert Humphrey) for the Democratic nomination in 1968, but he, too, would fall victim to an assassin, killed that June on the night of his victory in the California primary.)

Several additional Dobrynin reports of conversations with Robert Kennedy after the crisis appear in this *Bulletin*, mostly dealing with disagreements and details concerning the terms of the final settlement: which Soviet weapons would have to be withdrawn, the timetable for the lifting of the U.S. blockade, disputes over inspection and U.S. overlights, etc. But a few human touches also lighten the diplomatic discourse, and hint at the developing rapport between these two men who probably felt that they had had the fate of the world in their hands.

A meeting at the Russian Embassy on the evening of November 12, for example, began with Dobrynin’s handing over a confidential oral message from Khrushchev to President Kennedy that included a congratulatory note on the results of the Congressional elec-

tions, with special reference to the defeat of Kennedy’s erstwhile presidential rival, former Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, in the California gubernatorial contest.¹¹ “When [Robert Kennedy] got to the place that spoke of Nixon’s defeat in the elections,” Dobrynin reported, “he immediately grinned, saying: ‘Your chairman is a real master of colorful expression that expressed the true essence of the issue. Yes, we are quite satisfied with Nixon’s defeat, and in general we are not complaining about the results of the election.’ It was felt that this portion of the message was received with definite satisfaction.”

As Kennedy was leaving the Embassy after a tough hour-and-a-half discussion, mostly consumed by haggling over the U.S. demand that the Soviets take their IL-28 bombers out of Cuba,

he glimpsed a crowd of dancing couples in the embassy’s parlor. Realizing that this was a friendly welcome party arranged by the embassy community for the Bolshoi Theater troupe that had just arrived in Washington, he said that he would like to meet with the troupe. Mingling with and greeting almost all the members of the troupe, he delivered a welcome speech in which he said that the President was preparing to attend their premier the following evening. At the end, he kissed Maya Plisetskaya when he found out that he and she had been born in the same year, month, and day, and said they would celebrate their birthdays in a week. None of this needs to be mentioned especially, but all in all the behavior of Robert Kennedy, who is ordinarily quite a reserved and glum man, reflects to some degree the calmer and more normal mood in the White House after the tense days that shook Washington, even though this fact is concealed in various ways by American propaganda.¹²

That an appreciation of the new prominence of the president’s brother extended to Dobrynin’s bosses in the Kremlin became evident in a private conversation between Robert Kennedy and special Soviet envoy Anastas I. Mikoyan, a veteran member of the

CPSU Central Committee, at a dinner party at the home of Interior Secretary Stewart Udall on the evening of November 30—an occasion one American present described as a “strange, seemingly unreal evening” as enemies who had nearly engaged in thermonuclear war only weeks war wiled away the hours in drinking, toasts, and (sometimes forced) convivial conversation.¹³ A wily diplomatic trouble-shooter since the Stalin era, Mikoyan was passing through Washington after three weeks of difficult negotiations in Cuba with Fidel Castro over the outcome of the crisis and a day before the Udall affair had met with President Kennedy at the White House.

Before the meal was served (as Mikoyan related in a cable printed in this *Bulletin*), Robert Kennedy invited Mikoyan into a separate room for a tete-a-tete in which he underlined the importance above all (“even more important than the fates of my children and your grandchildren”) of restoring personal trust between his brother and Khrushchev. Mikoyan not only agreed and assured Robert Kennedy that Khrushchev felt the same way, but said that the Soviet government applauded the president’s “self-possession” and willingness to compromise at “the most dangerous moment, when the world stood at the edge of thermonuclear war.”

Moscow, moreover, Mikoyan added, had “noticed the positive role that you, the president’s brother, played during the confidential negotiations” between the U.S. and Soviet leaderships during the crisis. Robert Kennedy expressed an interest in visiting the USSR, an idea which Mikoyan warmly endorsed, especially should relations between the two rivals improve after surviving (and resolving) the rough Cuban passage.

Those relations did in fact improve somewhat in the succeeding months, leading to, among other events, John F. Kennedy’s conciliatory American University speech in April 1963 and the signing of U.S.-Soviet pacts on a limited nuclear test ban and a hot line between Washington and Moscow. But the post-Cuban Missile Crisis opening for a continued rapprochement between

both Kennedy brothers and Khrushchev—a prospect the Americans thought would last through a second Kennedy Administration—ended with the U.S. president’s assassination in Dallas in November 1963 and Khrushchev’s toppling less than a year later.

**Robert F. Kennedy, Memorandum
for Dean Rusk on Meeting with
Anatoly F. Dobrynin on
27 October 1962**

TOP SECRET

Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D.C.
October 30, 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FROM
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

At the request of Secretary Rusk, I telephoned Ambassador Dobrynin at approximately 7:15 p.m. on Saturday, October 27th. I asked him if he would come to the Justice Department at a quarter of eight.

We met in my office. I told him first that we understood that the work was continuing on the Soviet missile bases in Cuba. Further, I explained to him that in the last two hours we had found that our planes flying over Cuba had been fired upon and that one of our U-2’s had been shot down and the pilot killed. I said these men were flying unarmed planes.

I told him that this was an extremely serious turn in events. We would have to make certain decisions within the next 12 or possibly 24 hours. There was a very little time left. If the Cubans were shooting at our planes, then we were going to shoot back. This could not help but bring on further incidents and that he had better understand the full implications of this matter.

He raised the point that the argument the Cubans were making was that we were violating Cuban air space. I replied that if we had not been violating Cuban air space then we would still

be believing what he and Khrushchev had said—that there were no long-range missiles in Cuba. In any case I said that this matter was far more serious than the air space over Cuba and involved peoples all over the world.

I said that he had better understand the situation and he had better communicate that understanding to Mr. Khrushchev. Mr. Khrushchev and he had misled us. The Soviet Union had secretly established missile bases in Cuba while at the same time proclaiming, privately and publicly, that this would never be done. I said those missile bases had to go and they had to go right away. We had to have a commitment by at least tomorrow that those bases would be removed. This was not an ultimatum, I said, but just a statement of fact. He should understand that if they did not remove those bases then we would remove them. His country might take retaliatory actions but he should understand that before this was over, while there might be dead Americans there would also be dead Russians.

He then asked me what offer we were making. I said a letter had just been transmitted to the Soviet Embassy which stated in substance that the missile bases should be dismantled and all offensive weapons should be removed from Cuba. In return, if Cuba and Castro and the Communists ended their subversive activities in other Central and Latin-American countries, we would agree to keep peace in the Caribbean and not permit an invasion from American soil.

He then asked me about Khrushchev’s other proposal dealing with the removal of the missiles from Turkey. I replied that there could be no quid pro quo — no deal of this kind could be made. This was a matter that had to be considered by NATO and that it was up to NATO to make the decision. I said it was completely impossible for NATO to take such a step under the present threatening position of the Soviet Union. ~~If some time elapsed — and per your instructions, I mentioned four or five months — I said I was sure that these matters could be resolved satisfactorily.~~ [crossed out by hand—ed.]

Per your instructions I repeated that there could be no deal of any kind and that any steps toward easing tensions in other parts of the world largely depended on the Soviet Union and Mr. Khrushchev taking action in Cuba and taking it immediately.

I repeated to him that this matter could not wait and that he had better contact Mr. Khrushchev and have a commitment from him by the next day to withdraw the missile bases under United Nations supervision for otherwise, I said, there would be drastic consequences.

RFK: amn

[Source: John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA; provided to CWIHP by Prof. Peter Roman, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA.]

¹ Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1969; citations from Mentor/New American Library paperback edition, 1969). Questions about the book's reliability deepened after another former Kennedy aide, speechwriter Theodore Sorensen, acknowledged that, as an uncredited editor of the manuscript, he taken it upon himself to delete "explicit" references to the arrangement he and Soviet ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin reached on the evening of 27 October 1962 regarding the removal of U.S. Jupiter missiles from Turkey as part of the settlement of the crisis. Also problematic is the fact that Robert Kennedy's original diary, on which the book is based, has not been opened to researchers. Sorensen made his confession upon being challenged by Dobrynin at a January 1989 oral history conference on the crisis held in Moscow. See Barton J. Bernstein, "Reconsidering the Missile Crisis: Dealing with the Problems of the American Jupiters in Turkey," in James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's 1992), 55-129, esp. 56-57, 94-96, 125-126 fn 183.

² The most detailed account of Robert F. Kennedy's part in the missile crisis, and his life generally, can be found in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *Robert F. Kennedy and His Times* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978; citations from Futura Publications paperback edition, 1979).

³ See Jim Hershberg, "Anatomy of a Controversy: Anatoly F. Dobrynin's Meeting with Robert F. Kennedy, Saturday, 27 October 1962," *CWIHP*

Bulletin 5 (Spring 1995), 75, 77-80.

⁴ Dobrynin's cabled report (dated 24 October 1962) of the October 23 meeting with RFK can be found in *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 71-73; see also Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 65-66, and Schlesinger, Jr., *Robert F. Kennedy and His Times*, 553-554, which cites RFK's unpublished memorandum of the meeting. Neither of those accounts note RFK's agitated state, which Dobrynin highlighted. Dobrynin's cable clearly served as a principal source for the account published in Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 81-82. Dobrynin notes that he deliberately did not sugarcoat Robert Kennedy's critical comments about the Kremlin leadership in order to get across the seriousness of the situation.]

⁵ See Dobrynin cable of 5 November 1962 in this *Bulletin*.

⁶ See transcript of 16 October 1962 ExComm meeting, 6:30-7:55 p.m., John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA. The transcript quotes RFK as wondering "...whether there is some other way we can get involved in this through, uh, Guantanamo Bay, or something, er, or whether there's some ship that, you know, sink the Maine again or something."

⁷ See Schlesinger, *Robert F. Kennedy and His Times*, 546, 548-49.

⁸ Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, 82-83.

⁹ See Dobrynin cable of 30 October 1962 printed in this *Bulletin*. Although Robert Kennedy's notes for this meeting and a memorandum to Rusk have been cited from the RFK papers by his biographer—see Schlesinger, Jr., *Robert F. Kennedy and His Times*, 563-564—State Department historians have been unable to locate a U.S. record of this meeting: see *U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States [FRUS], 1961-1963, Vol. VI: Kennedy-Khrushchev Exchanges* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1996), source note on p. 189. The letter Robert Kennedy handed back, from Khrushchev to John F. Kennedy dated 28 October 1962, was first published in the Spring 1992 issue of *Problems of Communism*, 60-62, and also appears in *FRUS, 1961-1963, Vol. VI*, pp. 189—190.

¹⁰ See Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, pp. 90-91.

¹¹ Nixon had been defeated by his Democratic rival in the California gubernatorial elections, upon which he announced his retirement from politics. The relevant passage in Khrushchev's 12 November 1962 message read: "Now the elections in your country, Mr. President, are over. You made a statement that you were very pleased with the results of these elections. They, the elections,

indeed, were in your favor. The success does not upset us either—though that is of course your internal affair. You managed to pin your political rival, Mr. Nixon, to the mat. This did not draw tears from our eyes either...." See James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 290.

¹² See Dobrynin cable of 12 November 1962, printed in this *Bulletin*, and also Schlesinger, *Robert F. Kennedy and His Times*, 567-568.

¹³ See Mikoyan report on the Udall dinner, 30 November 1962, in this *Bulletin*; the American account of the party is from George Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), 308-309.

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“Lessons” of the Cuban Missile Crisis for Warsaw Pact Nuclear Operations

by Mark Kramer

The role of the Warsaw Pact in the Cuban missile crisis was negligible. All evidence suggests that the Soviet Union neither consulted nor even informed its East European allies about the installation of medium-range and tactical nuclear missiles in Cuba before the deployment of the former was revealed by the U.S. government.¹ Nor did the Soviet leadership consult its Warsaw Pact allies about the removal of the missiles. Although the Pact declared a joint military alert on 23 October 1962 (the day after President John F. Kennedy’s televised revelation of the Soviet missile deployments), the alert had no more than a symbolic impact and was carried out solely at Moscow’s behest.² The joint alert was formally cancelled on 21 November 1962, the same day that the Soviet Union ended its own unilateral alert (and a day after the U.S. naval blockade of Cuba was lifted).³ So peripheral was the alliance to the Soviet Union’s handling of the crisis that it was not until long after the matter had been resolved that the Soviet Prime Minister, Anastas Mikoyan, bothered to inform the East European governments about the Soviet Union’s motives for deploying and withdrawing the missiles.⁴

The marginal significance of the Warsaw Pact during the Cuban missile crisis hardly comes as a great surprise. In 1962 the Pact was still little more than a paper organization and had not yet acquired a meaningful role in Soviet military strategy.⁵ Moreover, the crisis was far outside the European theater, and East European leaders had resisted Soviet efforts to extend the alliance’s purview beyond the continent. Despite fears that the showdown over Cuba might spark a NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation in Berlin, the situation in Germany remained calm throughout the crisis.⁶ Hence, the standoff in the Caribbean was a matter

for the Soviet Union to handle on its own, not a matter for the Warsaw Pact.

Despite the near-irrelevance of the Warsaw Pact during the crisis, the events of October 1962 did have important effects on the alliance, particularly on the nuclear command-and-control arrangements that were established in the mid-1960s. This article will draw on recent disclosures from the East German, Czechoslovak, Polish, and Hungarian archives to show how the Cuban missile crisis influenced Warsaw Pact nuclear operations. No definitive judgments about this matter are yet possible because the most crucial documents are all in Moscow, and the archival situation in Russia is still highly unsatisfactory.⁷ Nevertheless, enough evidence has emerged from East-Central Europe to permit several tentative conclusions.

The article will begin by briefly reviewing the “lessons” that the Cuban missile crisis offered for Soviet nuclear weapons deployments abroad. It will then delineate the command-and-control arrangements that were set up in the mid-1960s for Warsaw Pact nuclear operations, and examine the East European states’ unsuccessful efforts to alter those arrangements. The article will conclude with some observations about the legacy of the Cuban missile crisis for Warsaw Pact nuclear operations, a legacy that endured until the Pact itself collapsed in 1990-91.

“Lessons” from the Missile Crisis

Several features of the Cuban missile crisis were of direct relevance to Soviet nuclear deployments in Eastern Europe later on. The “lessons” that Soviet officials derived from the crisis were of course not the only factor (or even the most important factor) shaping the Warsaw Pact’s nuclear command structure, but they seem to have been of considerable influence, at least implicitly. Although Soviet leaders had

been concerned well before the Cuban missile crisis about the difficulty of retaining secure control over nuclear weapons and about the danger of unauthorized actions, the crisis put these risks into a whole new light.⁸ By underscoring how easily control could be lost, the crisis inevitably bolstered Moscow’s determination to ensure strict centralized command over all nuclear operations, including nuclear operations conducted by the Warsaw Pact.

One of the most disconcerting lessons of the Cuban missile crisis from the Soviet perspective was the potential for nuclear weapons to be misused if the aims of local actors were not identical to Soviet goals. It is now known that at the height of the crisis Fidel Castro sent a top-secret cable to Moscow urging the Soviet Union to launch a nuclear strike against the United States if U.S. forces invaded Cuba.⁹ Castro apparently had been led to believe that the Soviet Union would be willing to go to war—and risk its own destruction—in defense of Cuba. Nikita Khrushchev’s response to Castro’s plea indicates that the Soviet leader had no intention of ordering the use of nuclear weapons, regardless of what happened to Cuba.¹⁰

For Khrushchev, this episode was especially unnerving because he initially had given serious consideration to providing Castro with direct command over Soviet forces in Cuba, including the nuclear-capable Frog (“Luna”) missiles and Il-28 aircraft.¹¹ (Only the medium-range SS-4 and SS-5 missiles would have been left under Moscow’s command.) As it turned out, Khrushchev decided not to give Castro any direct jurisdiction over Soviet tactical nuclear forces; indeed, the draft treaty on military cooperation between the Soviet Union and Cuba, which was due to take effect once the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba was publicly announced by Moscow and Ha-

vana later that fall, would have left the “military units of the two states under the command of their respective governments.”¹² Even so, the Cuban leader’s message on 26 October still struck a raw nerve in Moscow.¹³ It was a vivid reminder of the dangers that might have resulted if the Soviet Union had delegated any responsibility for nuclear operations.

A related lesson about the dangers posed by local actors pertained to the role of the commander of Soviet forces in Cuba, Army-General Issa Pliev, who was chosen for the post because of his long-standing and very close friendship with both Khrushchev and the Soviet Defense Minister, Marshal Rodion Malinovskii.¹⁴ At no time during the crisis did Pliev have authority to order the use of either medium-range or tactical nuclear missiles, but it is now known that several weeks before the crisis—in the late summer of 1962—Malinovskii had considered the possibility of giving Pliev pre-delegated authority to order the use of tactical missiles against invading U.S. troops if Pliev’s lines of communication with Moscow were severed and all other means of defense against an invasion had proven insufficient. A written order to this effect was prepared on 8 September 1962, but in the end Malinovskii declined to sign it.¹⁵ Thus, at the time of the crisis Pliev had no independent authority to order the use of nuclear weapons or even to order that nuclear warheads, which were stored separately from the missiles, be released for possible employment. The limitations on Pliev’s scope of action during the crisis were reinforced by two cables transmitted by Malinovskii on 22 and 25 October, which “categorically” prohibited any use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances without explicit authorization from Moscow.¹⁶

The strictures imposed by the Soviet leadership held up well during the crisis, as the procedural safeguards for nuclear operations proved sufficient to forestall any untoward incidents.¹⁷ For the most part, Khrushchev’s and Malinovskii’s faith in Pliev was well-founded. Nevertheless, it is clear that Pliev wanted to ease some of the pro-

cedural restrictions—at least for tactical missiles—even after he received the two telegrams that “categorically” forbade him to order the issuance or use of nuclear weapons without express authorization. On 26 October he sent a cable to Moscow in which he apparently mentioned that Castro wanted him to prepare for a nuclear strike and that, as a result, he had decided it was time to move nuclear warheads closer to the missiles (though without actually issuing them to the missile units). Pliev then requested that his decision be approved and that he be given due authority to order the preparation of tactical missiles for launch if, as appeared imminent, U.S. troops invaded the island.¹⁸ Soviet leaders immediately turned down both of his requests and reemphasized that no actions involving nuclear weapons were to be undertaken without direct authorization from Moscow.¹⁹

Still, the very fact that Pliev sought to have the restrictions lifted, and his seeming willingness to use tactical nuclear weapons if necessary, provided a sobering indication of the risks entailed in giving discretion to local commanders. The risks would have been especially acute in this instance because there were no technical safeguards on the nuclear weapons in Cuba to serve as a fallback in case Pliev (or someone else) attempted to circumvent the procedural safeguards.²⁰ This is not to say that it would have been easy for Pliev to evade the procedural limits—to do so he would have had to obtain cooperation from troops all along the chain of command—but there was no technical barrier *per se* to unauthorized actions.

Thus, one of the clear lessons of the crisis was the need not only to maintain stringent procedural safeguards for all Soviet nuclear forces, but also to equip those forces with elaborate technical devices that would prevent unauthorized or accidental launches. This applied above all to nuclear weapons deployed abroad, where the lines of communication were more vulnerable to being severed or disrupted.²¹

One further lesson from the Cuban missile crisis, which reinforced the perceived need for strict, centralized con-

trol over all nuclear operations, was the role that accidents played. The most conspicuous instance came on 27 October when an American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft was shot down over Cuba.²² The rules of engagement for Soviet troops in Cuba did not permit the downing of American planes except those carrying out an attack.²³ When the U-2 was shot down, no one in Moscow was quite sure what had happened—Khrushchev and most others mistakenly thought that Castro had ordered Soviet troops to fire at the plane—but everyone was certain that further incidents of this sort might cause the crisis to spin out of control.²⁴ The risks posed by accidents would have been especially great if the local commander (i.e., Pliev) had been given independent authority to order the use of nuclear weapons. After all, Pliev and other officers based in Cuba, whose lives were directly at risk during the crisis, were naturally inclined to overreact to unintended “provocations” from the opposing side. To the extent that such overreactions could not be avoided in future crises, it was essential that the consequences be minimized and that further escalation be prevented. Obviously, it would be vastly more difficult to regain any semblance of control if local actors “accidentally” resorted to the use of nuclear weapons.

Hence, the accidents that occurred during the Cuban missile crisis underscored the need for rigid safeguards, both procedural and technical, to preclude the use of Soviet nuclear weapons except in the most dire emergency. This lesson, like the others that Khrushchev and his colleagues derived from the crisis, survived the change of leadership in Moscow in October 1964. Although Leonid Brezhnev altered many aspects of Khrushchev’s military policies, he was just as determined as his predecessor to retain stringent political control over Soviet nuclear forces.

Nuclear Operations and the Warsaw Pact

Nuclear weapons first became an issue for the Warsaw Pact in mid-1958

when, allegedly in response to deployments by NATO, Khrushchev warned that the Pact would be “compelled by force of circumstance to consider stationing [tactical nuclear] missiles in the German Democratic Republic, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.”²⁵ Shortly thereafter, the Czechoslovak, East German, and Polish armed forces began receiving nuclear-capable aircraft and surface-to-surface missiles from the Soviet Union.²⁶ The Bulgarian and Hungarian armies also soon obtained nuclear-capable aircraft and missiles from Moscow; and even the Romanian military was eventually supplied with nuclear-capable Frog-7 and Scud-B missiles. In all cases, the deployment of these delivery vehicles was well under way by the time of the Cuban missile crisis.

The wartime command-and-control arrangements for the new East European weapons were still in flux in 1962, and a variety of options were under consideration. One such option had been alluded to in 1959 by the East German government, which announced that it would “request its allies to place [nuclear] missile weapons at its disposal” if the West German government gained a role in NATO’s nuclear operations.²⁷ At the time, Soviet officials had reacted warily to this proposal, but had not dismissed it out of hand. Moscow’s stance changed, however, in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis. From then on, all wartime command-and-control arrangements for allied nuclear operations were made to fit a single pattern. The East European countries’ weapons were still officially described as components of the “Warsaw Pact’s joint nuclear forces” and were used for simulated nuclear strikes during Pact exercises, but all nuclear warheads for the delivery systems remained under exclusive Soviet control, and the delivery vehicles themselves would have come under direct Soviet command if they had ever been equipped with nuclear warheads during a crisis. Moreover, the thousands of tactical nuclear weapons deployed by Soviet forces on East European territory were not subject to any sort of “dual-key” arrangement along the lines that NATO established in the mid-

1960s. Whenever Warsaw Pact exercises included combat techniques for nuclear warfare (as they routinely did from early 1962 on), the decision on when to “go nuclear” was left entirely to the Soviet High Command and political leadership.²⁸ In every respect, then, the East European governments were denied any say in the use of the Pact’s “joint” nuclear arsenal.

The exclusivity of Soviet command was reinforced by secret agreements that the Soviet Union concluded in the early to mid-1960s with Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland regarding the storage of nuclear warheads in those countries. Although all the agreements were bilateral, they were described as coming “within the framework of the Warsaw Pact.” The first such agreements were signed with East Germany and Czechoslovakia before the Cuban missile crisis. The Soviet-East German agreements, signed at various intervals in the early 1960s, covered some 16 storage sites, all of which were controlled exclusively by special troops assigned to the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany.²⁹ The East German authorities had no say at all in the location or maintenance of these facilities, not to mention the use of the munitions stored there.

Soviet agreements with Czechoslovakia were somewhat more complicated because no Soviet troops had been present on Czechoslovak territory since the end of 1945. Two preliminary agreements were signed in August 1961 and February 1962 entitling the Soviet Union to dispatch nuclear warheads immediately to Czechoslovakia in the event of an emergency.³⁰ After the Cuban missile crisis, those two agreements were supplanted by a much more far-reaching “Treaty Between the Governments of the USSR and CSSR on Measures to Increase the Combat Readiness of Missile Forces,” which was signed by Malinovskii and his Czechoslovak counterpart, Army-General Bohumir Lomsky, in December 1965.³¹ The treaty provided for the permanent stationing of Soviet nuclear warheads at three sites in western Czechoslovakia.

This third agreement with Czecho-

slovakia was concluded just after the Soviet Union had worked out a similar arrangement with Hungary.³² The Soviet-Hungarian agreement was signed by Brezhnev and the Hungarian leader, Janos Kadar, and was kept secret from almost all other Hungarian officials. Much the same was true of an agreement that the Soviet Union concluded with Poland in early 1967.³³ Only a few top Polish officials were permitted to find out about the document.

The Soviet agreements with all four countries covered nuclear warheads slated for use on delivery vehicles belonging to Soviet troops stationed in those countries. Some of the warheads were also intended for weapons deployed by the local armies, but in that case the delivery vehicles would have been transferred to direct Soviet command. Under the new agreements East European officials had no role in the use of the Pact’s “joint” nuclear arsenal, nor any control over the reinforced storage bunkers for nuclear warheads (or even the housing for elite units assigned to guard the bunkers). A senior East European military official later confirmed that “the procedures for the defense and protection of these special-purpose storage centers for nuclear warheads were such that no one from our side had permission to enter, and even Soviet officials who were not directly responsible for guarding and operating the buildings were not allowed in.”³⁴

Thus, by the late 1960s the Soviet and East European governments had forged a nuclear command-and-control structure for the Warsaw Pact that gave exclusive say to the Soviet Union. Even before the Cuban missile crisis, Soviet leaders had been inclined to move in this direction, but the crisis greatly accelerated the trend and effectively ruled out anything less than complete control in Moscow.

Intra-Pact Debate on Nuclear “Sharing”

The effects of the Cuban missile crisis could also be felt, if only implicitly, when the Soviet Union had to deal with complaints from its allies about the Warsaw Pact’s nuclear arrangements.

The lack of East European input proved unsatisfactory to several of the allied governments, who urged that they be given some kind of role in nuclear-release authorization. Their concerns were prompted in part by changes in Soviet military doctrine in the mid-1960s, which seemed to open the way for a nuclear or conventional war confined to Europe. Under Khrushchev, Soviet military doctrine had long been predicated on the assumption that any war in Europe would rapidly escalate to an all-out nuclear exchange between the superpowers; but by the time Khrushchev was ousted in October 1964, Soviet military theorists had already begun to imply that a European conflict need not escalate to the level of strategic nuclear war.³⁵ Under Brezhnev, Soviet military analyses of limited warfare in Europe, including the selective use of tactical nuclear weapons, grew far more explicit and elaborate.³⁶ Although this doctrinal shift made sense from the Soviet perspective, it stirred unease among East European leaders, who feared that their countries might be used as tactical nuclear battlegrounds without their having the slightest say in it.

The issue became a source of contention at the January 1965 meeting of the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee (PCC), where the assembled leaders discussed NATO's plans to create a Multi-Lateral Force (MLF) that would supposedly give West Germany access to nuclear-armed missiles. The PCC warned that if an MLF were formed and the West Germans were included, the Warsaw Pact would have to resort to "defensive measures and *corresponding steps*."³⁷ The nature of these "corresponding steps" was never specified, but Romanian and Czechoslovak officials at the meeting maintained that the obvious solution was for the Soviet Union to grant its Warsaw Pact allies a direct say in the use of nuclear weapons stationed on East European soil.³⁸ The Romanians were especially insistent on having responsibility shared for *all* Warsaw Pact nuclear systems, including those deployed with the various Groups of Soviet Forces. Brezhnev and his col-

leagues, however, were averse to any steps that would even marginally erode the Soviet Union's exclusive authority to order nuclear strikes, and it soon became clear during the meeting that Soviet views on such matters would prevail. As a result, the PCC communique simply called for both German states to forswear nuclear weapons, proposed the creation of a nuclear-free zone in central Europe, and advocated a freeze on all nuclear stockpiles.³⁹ The implication was that arrangements within the Warsaw Pact were best left unchanged.

That stance was reaffirmed over the next few months in a series of conspicuous Soviet declarations that "the Warsaw Pact is dependent on the *Soviet* strategic missile forces" and that "the security of all socialist countries is reliably guaranteed by the nuclear missile strength of *the Soviet Union*."⁴⁰ (Italics added by the author.) The same message was conveyed later in the year by the joint "October Storm" military exercises in East Germany, which featured simulated nuclear strikes authorized solely by the USSR.⁴¹ In the meantime, the Soviet monopoly over allied nuclear weapons procedures was being reinforced by the series of agreements signed with Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland, as discussed above. The codification of exclusive Soviet control over nuclear weapons deployed in the other Warsaw Pact countries all but eliminated any basis for the East European governments to seek a role in the alliance's nuclear command structure.

Yet even after the Soviet Union tried to put the matter to rest, controversy persisted within the Warsaw Pact about the allocation of responsibility for tactical nuclear weapons. At a closed meeting of Pact leaders in East Berlin in February 1966, Romania again pressed for greater East European participation in all aspects of allied military planning, and was again rebuffed.⁴² A few months later, the Czechoslovak Defense Minister, Army-General Bohumir Lomsky, publicly declared that the East European states should be given increased responsibility for the full range of issues confronting the Warsaw Pact.⁴³ That same

week, a detailed Romanian proposal for modifications to the alliance was leaked to the French Communist newspaper, *L'Humanité*; the document called for, among other things, an East European role in any decisions involving the potential use of nuclear weapons.⁴⁴ Subsequently, at the July 1966 session of the PCC in Bucharest, officials from Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary renewed their bid for "greater rights of co-determination in planning and implementing common coalition matters," including (by implication) the use of nuclear weapons.⁴⁵

As on previous occasions, however, the Soviet Union resisted whatever pressure was exerted for the sharing of nuclear-release authority. In September 1966, a few months after the Bucharest conference, the Warsaw Pact conducted huge "Vltava" exercises, which included simulated nuclear strikes under exclusive Soviet control.⁴⁶ The same arrangement was preserved in all subsequent Pact maneuvers involving simulated nuclear exchanges. Thus, well before the signing of the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty put a symbolic end to the whole nuclear-sharing debate, the Soviet Union had firmly established its exclusive, centralized control over the Warsaw Pact's "joint" nuclear forces and operations.

The Lessons of the Crisis and Allied Nuclear Arrangements

The legacy of the Cuban missile crisis helped ensure that the intra-Warsaw Pact debate in the mid-1960s did not bring about any change in the alliance's nuclear command-and-control structure. Had it not been for the dangers that were so clearly revealed by the events of October 1962, Soviet leaders might have been willing to consider an arrangement for the Warsaw Pact similar to the "dual-key" system that NATO adopted. When Operation "Anadyr" was first being planned in the late spring of 1962, Khrushchev had flirted with the idea of giving Fidel Castro broad command over Soviet tactical nuclear weapons in Cuba as well as over all non-nuclear forces on the island. Ultimately, Khrushchev decided

not to share or delegate any responsibility for the nuclear-capable weapons based in Cuba, but the very fact that the issue was considered at all suggests that if the Cuban missile crisis had not intervened, the Soviet Union might have been receptive to some form of nuclear “sharing” with its East European allies. Indeed, a “dual-key” arrangement for the Warsaw Pact, which would not have provided any independent authority to the East European countries, could easily have been justified as a response to NATO’s policy and as a useful means of strengthening allied cohesion. But after October 1962, when Soviet leaders evidently drew a number of lessons about the risks of even sharing, much less delegating, nuclear authority, the prospects of adopting a “dual-key” system for the Warsaw Pact essentially vanished.

Although Moscow’s willingness to share control over the Warsaw Pact’s “joint” nuclear arsenal would have been sharply constrained even before October 1962 by the lack of permissive-action links (PALs) and other use-denial mechanisms on Soviet nuclear weapons, that factor alone would not have been decisive if the Cuban missile crisis had not occurred. After all, when Soviet officials seriously contemplated allotting partial nuclear authority to Castro in 1962, that was long before Soviet tactical weapons were equipped with PALs. The physical separation of warheads from delivery vehicles, as had been planned for the missiles based in Cuba, was regarded at the time as a sufficient (if cumbersome) barrier against unauthorized actions. That approach had long been used for tactical weapons deployed by Soviet forces in Eastern Europe, and it would have been just as efficacious if a “dual-key” system had been adopted—that is, if the East European armies had been given control over the Pact’s nuclear-capable delivery vehicles. After the Cuban missile crisis, however, the option of relying solely on the physical separation of warheads and delivery vehicles was deemed inadequate. In the latter half of the 1960s, the Soviet Union began incorporating electronic use-denial features into its strategic missiles, and the

same was true of Soviet tactical weapons by the early to mid-1970s.⁴⁷ Concerns in Moscow about the physical security of nuclear weapons were hardly negligible before October 1962—in part because of the possibility that requisite procedures might not be followed—but it was not until after the Cuban missile crisis that Soviet leaders fully appreciated the magnitude of this risk.

The Cuban missile crisis also heightened Soviet concerns about the particular dangers posed by crises. To be sure, Soviet leaders were hardly complacent before October 1962 about the need to maintain tight political control over nuclear operations; indeed, the stringent centralization of nuclear command was a consistent theme in Soviet military planning.⁴⁸ Even so, it was not until after the Cuban missile crisis—and especially in light of the unexpected interventions by Fidel Castro—that this factor became a paramount reason to deny any share of nuclear-release authorization to the East European governments. Although East European officials could not have ordered the use of nuclear weapons on their own, they might have inadvertently (or deliberately) taken steps in a crisis that would have caused NATO governments to believe that a Warsaw Pact nuclear strike was forthcoming, regardless of what actual Soviet intentions were. That, in turn, might have triggered a preemptive nuclear attack by NATO. Only by excluding the East European states altogether from the nuclear-release process could the Soviet Union avoid the unintended escalation of a crisis.

The risks posed by a “dual-key” arrangement could have been mitigated if the Soviet Union had built in extra procedural and technical safeguards, but this in turn would have created operational problems for Soviet troops who might one day have been ordered to use the weapons. If a future conflict had become so dire that Soviet leaders had decided to authorize the employment of tactical nuclear weapons, they would have wanted their orders to be carried out as fast as possible, before the situation on the battlefield had changed.⁴⁹ By contrast, East European political and military officials might have been hesi-

tant about ordering the nuclear destruction of a site in Western Europe, not least because the launch of nuclear weapons against West European targets might well have provoked retaliatory strikes by NATO against East European sites. The problem would have been especially salient in the case of East German officials who would have been asked to go along with nuclear strikes against targets in West Germany. Thus, even though Soviet officials could have developed a hedge against the risks that emerged during the Cuban missile crisis, the safeguards needed for this purpose would have been extremely burdensome, depriving the Pact of the ability to respond in a timely manner. From the Soviet perspective, it made far more sense to circumvent the problem entirely by eschewing any form of shared authority.

It is ironic that the Cuban missile crisis, which barely involved the Warsaw Pact at all, would have had such an important long-term effect on the alliance. It is also ironic that the actions of a third party, Fidel Castro, posed one of the greatest dangers during an event that has traditionally been depicted as a bilateral U.S.-Soviet confrontation. Not only must the Cuban missile crisis be thought of as a “triangular” showdown; its repercussions can now be seen to have been at least as great for Soviet allies, notably Cuba and Eastern Europe, as for the Soviet Union itself.

¹ This statement is based on a perusal of documents from the East German, Czechoslovak, and Polish archives. See, e.g., “Odvolanie opatreni v zavislosti s usnesenim VKO UV KSC, 25.10.62 (Karibska krize),” 25 October 1962 (Top Secret), in Vojensky Historicky Archiv (VHA) Praha, Fond (F.) Ministerstvo Narodni Obrany (MNO) CSSR, 1962, Operacni sprava Generalniho stabu cs. armady (GS/OS), 8/25.

² “V shtabe Ob”edinennykh Vooruzhenykh Sil stran Varshavskogo Dogovora,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 23 October 1962, p. 1. For the effects of the alert from 27 October through 23 November, see the series of top-secret memoranda to the CPSU CC Presidium from Soviet Defense Minister Rodion Malinovskii and the Chief of the Soviet General Staff, Mikhail Zakharov, 5 November 1962, 17 November 1962, and 24 November 1962, in Tsentr Khраниeniya Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii (TsKhSD), Moscow, F. 89, Opis’ (Op.) 28, Delo (D.) 14, Listy (LL.) 1-8.

³ “V shtabe Ob”edinennykh vooruzhenykh sil stran Varshavskogo Dogovora,” *Krasnaya zvezda*

(Moscow), 22 November 1962, p. 1.

⁴ See the account by the Hungarian charge d'affaires in Washington, D.C. in October 1962 (who later defected), Janos Radvanyi, *Hungary and the Superpowers: The 1956 Revolution and Realpolitik* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), p. 137. China, too, was not informed in advance about either the placement or the withdrawal of the missiles in Cuba. This point was noted by Chinese leaders during the bitter Sino-Soviet polemics in 1963. See, for example, the exchanges in "On the Statement of the Communist Party of the USA," *Peking Review* (Beijing), 15 March 1963, pp. 11-13; "Otkrytoe pis'mo Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuzu partiinym organizatsiyam i vsem kommunistam Sovetskogo Soyuzu," *Pravda* (Moscow), 14 July 1963, p. 1; and "Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government: A Comment on the Soviet Government's Statement of August 21," *Peking Review* (Beijing), 6 September 1963, pp. 7-11. See also the article by M.Y. Prozumenschikov in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

⁵ "Razvitie voennogo iskusstva v usloviyakh vedeniya raketno-yadernoi voyny po sovremennym predstavleniyam," Report No. 24762s (TOP SECRET) from Col.-General P. Ivashutin, chief of the Soviet General Staff's Main Intelligence Directorate, to Marshal M. V. Zakharov, head of the General Staff Military Academy, 28 August 1964, in Tsentral'nyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony (TsAMO), Delo (D.) 158, esp. Listy (L.) 352-3, 411-2, 423, and 400. I am grateful to Matthew Evangelista for providing me with a copy of this document.

⁶ This point is stressed in the top-secret cables adduced in note 2 *supra*.

⁷ On the state of the Russian archives, see Mark Kramer, "Archival Research in Moscow: Progress and Pitfalls," *Cold War International History Bulletin*, No. 3 (Fall 1993), pp. 1, 14-37.

⁸ "Razvitie voennogo iskusstva v usloviyakh vedeniya raketno-yadernoi voyny po sovremennym predstavleniyam," pp. 332-3.

⁹ "Obmen poslaniyami mezhdu N. S. Khrushchevym i F. Kastro v dni Karibskogo krizisa 1962 goda," *Vestnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del SSSR* (Moscow), No. 24 (31 December 1990), pp. 67-80, esp. pp. 71-73. This correspondence was first released in November 1990 by the Cuban, not Soviet, government. Fidel Castro was seeking to rebut a claim made in a portion of Nikita Khrushchev's memoirs that appeared in English for the first time in 1990. Khrushchev had recalled that Castro was urging him to launch a *preemptive* nuclear attack against the United States, whereas Castro insisted (correctly) that he had called for an all-out Soviet nuclear attack against the United States only if U.S. troops invaded Cuba. Soon after this correspondence was published in Spanish in the 23 November 1990 issue of the Havana daily *Granma* (and in English in the weekly edition of *Granma*), the Soviet government realized it had nothing to gain by keeping the Russian version secret any longer. Hence, the full correspondence was published in the Soviet Foreign Ministry's in-house journal, as cited here. [Ed. note: For Khrushchev's version, see *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes*, trans. and ed. by Jerrold

L. Schecter with Vyacheslav V. Luchkov (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1990), pp. 170-83, esp. pp. 177, 183; for an English translation of the correspondence and an accompanying commentary in *Granma*, see Appendix 2 of James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch (with the assistance of David Lewis), *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), pp. 474-91; the key letter, of Castro to Khrushchev on 26 October 1962, is on pp. 481-2.]

¹⁰ "Obmen poslaniyami mezhdu N. S. Khrushchevym i F. Kastro v dni Karibskogo krizisa 1962 goda," pp. 73-5. This point was re-emphasized to Castro by Prime Minister Mikoyan during their conversations in November 1962. See "Zapis' besedy A. I. Mikoyana s prem'er-ministrom revolyutsionnogo pravitel'stva Kuby F. Kastro," 12 November 1962 (Top Secret) and "O besedakh A. I. Mikoyana s F. Kastro," 20 November 1962 (Top Secret), both published in *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* (Moscow), Nos. 11-12 (November-December 1992), pp. 143-7 and 147-50, respectively. See esp. p. 149.

¹¹ It should be noted, however, that a decision to send 901-A4 nuclear warheads and 407-N6 bombs to Cuba for the Frogs and II-28s was not finalized until 8 September 1962, by which time Khrushchev may already have changed his mind about the command-and-control arrangements. See "Nachal'niku 12 glavnogo upravleniya Ministerstva oborony," 8 September 1962 (Top Secret), Memorandum from Defense Minister R. Malinovskii and Chief of the General Staff M. V. Zakharov, in TsAMO, "Dokumenty po meropriyatiyu 'Anadyr'," F. 16, Op. 3753. It is eminently possible that the nuclear-capable weapons would not have been equipped with nuclear warheads if they had been placed under Castro's command.

¹² "Dogovor mezhdu pravitel'stvom Respubliki Kuby i pravitel'stvom Soyuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik o voennom sotrudnichestve i vzaimnoi oborone," undated, Article 10.

¹³ See Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Vospominaniya* (Moscow: typescript, 1966-1970), Vol. IV, "Karibskii krizis," esp. p. 12. I am grateful to Khrushchev's son, Sergei, for providing me with a copy of the 3,600-page transcript of his father's memoirs. For an English translation of most of the account about the Cuban missile crisis, see *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes*, trans. and ed. by Jerrold L. Schecter and Vyacheslav V. Luchkov (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1990), pp. 170-83.

¹⁴ Maj.-General (ret.) V. Makarevskii, "O prem'ere N. S. Khrushcheve, marshale G. K. Zhukove i generale I. A. Plieve," *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* (Moscow), Nos. 8-9 (August-September 1994), p. 197. Makarevskii served for many years under Pliev's command. Pliev's close friendship with Khrushchev and Malinovskii is overlooked in the jaundiced assessment offered by General Anatolii Gribkov in *Operation ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago: Edition Q, 1994), pp. 25-6.

¹⁵ "Komanduyushchemu gruppoi sovetskikh voisk na o. Kuba," 8 September 1962 (Top Secret), in TsAMO, "Dokumenty po meropriyatiyu

'Anadyr,'" GSU GSh, F. 16, Op. 3753; reproduced in *Operation ANADYR*, p. 183. For a discussion of this matter and relevant citations, see Mark Kramer, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons, Soviet Command Authority, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Cold War International History Bulletin*, No. 3 (Fall 1993), pp. 40-46, esp. 42-3, 46.

¹⁶ "Troshnik — tovarishchu Pavlovu," No. 4/389 (Top Secret) from R. Malinovskii (Direktor), 22 October 1962, reproduced in *Operation ANADYR*, p. 181. See also Sergei Pavlenko, "Bezmyannye motostrelki otpravlyalis' na Kubu 'stoyat' nasmert'," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 29 December 1994, p. 4. For further discussion and relevant citations, see Kramer, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons, Soviet Command Authority, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 45-6.

¹⁷ In early 1994, General Anatolii Gribkov claimed that Pliev not only wanted to move several nuclear warheads out of storage on 26 October 1962, but had actually issued orders to that effect without authorization from Moscow. See *Operation ANADYR*, p. 63. Gribkov also elaborated on this assertion in a seminar organized by the Cold War International History Project and held at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars on 5 April 1994. However, he produced no evidence to back up his assertion that warheads were actually moved out, and in a lengthy interview in Moscow on 29 September 1994 he said he could not be certain that Pliev had given such an order. Gribkov's initial claim had already been contradicted by the Soviet officer who was in charge of the "central nuclear base" (i.e., the storage site for all nuclear warheads) in Cuba during the crisis, Colonel Nikolai Beloborodov, who testified in late 1992 that "nuclear weapons could have been used only if the missile officers had received orders via their own chain-of-command from the General Staff, and only if we, the officers responsible for storing and operating warheads, had received our own special codes. At no point did I receive any signals to issue warheads for either the medium-range missiles or the tactical weapons." See Lieut.-Colonel Anatolii Dokuchaev, "100-dnevnyi yadernyi krizis," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 6 November 1992, p. 2. Beloborodov re-emphasized this point several times during an interview in Moscow on 28 September 1994: "No nuclear munitions of any type, whether for the medium-range or the tactical weapons, were ever moved (*byly dostavleny*) out of storage during the crisis. Nor could they have been moved without my knowledge." Beloborodov's account was endorsed by General Leonid Garbuz, the deputy commander of Soviet forces in Cuba in 1962, in an interview that same day in Moscow.

¹⁸ The exact contents of Pliev's telegram on the 26th are unknown, but the numbering of telegrams that are available makes clear that he sent at least two that day, the second of which is the one in question. (The first of his telegrams on the 26th, which was declassified in October 1992, pertained only to air defense operations against possible U.S. air strikes.) The text of the Soviet leadership's response to Pliev's second cable is available (see next note), and, combined with retrospective comments by ex-Soviet officials, it suggests that Pliev referred to Castro's efforts and requested authority to move the warheads (though

not yet authority for actual use). For greater detail about this issue, see Mark Kramer, "The Cuban Missile Crisis and Nuclear Proliferation," *Security Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Autumn 1995), pp. 171-9.

¹⁹ "Troshnik — tovarishchu Pavlovu," No. 76639 (Top Secret), 27 October 1962, reproduced in *Operation ANADYR*, p. 182. See also Kramer, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons, Soviet Command Authority, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 46; and Pavlenko, "Bezmyannye motostrelki otpravlyalis' na Kubu," p. 4.

²⁰ Marshal V. F. Tolubko, "Glavnaya raketnaya sila strany," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 19 November 1963, p. 1.

²¹ See Khrushchev's comments on this point in *Vospominaniya*, Vol. IV, "Karibskii krizis," p. 18.

²² Army-General Yu. P. Maksimov *et al.*, eds., *Raketnye voiska strategicheskogo naznacheniya: Voennno-istoricheskii trud* (Moscow: Nauka, 1992), pp. 109-10. Detailed first-hand accounts by high-ranking Soviet air defense personnel who took part in the shootdown are available in "Voina ozhidalas' rassvetom," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 13 May 1993, p. 2.

²³ The rules of engagement are spelled out briefly in the cable from Malinovskii to Pliiev, as cited in Dokuchaev, "100-dnevnyi yadernyi krizis," p. 2. More elaborate rules are specified in documents now stored in the Russian General Staff archive; see "Dokumenty po meropriyatiyu 'Anadyr,'" in GSU GSh, F. 16, Op. 3753, D. 1, Korebka 3573.

²⁴ Khrushchev, *Vospominaniya*, Vol. IV, "Karibskii krizis," pp. 17-8.

²⁵ "Vystuplenie glavy Sovetskoi delegatsii Predsedatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR N. S. Khrushcheva na Soveshchaniy Politicheskogo Konsul'tativnogo Komiteta gosudarstv-uchastnikov Varshavskogo Dogovora 24 maya 1958 goda," *Pravda* (Moscow), 27 May 1958, p. 3.

²⁶ Thomas Wolfe, *Soviet Power in Europe, 1945-1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 150-1, 487-9.

²⁷ "Was ist der westdeutsche Militarismus?" *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 26 January 1959, pp. 1-2. See also "Wortlaut der Rede Walter Ulbrichts auf dem XXI. Parteitag der KPDSU," *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 30 January 1959, p. 1.

²⁸ Der Bundesminister der Verteidigung, *Militarische Planungen des Warschauer Paktes in Zentraleuropa: Eine Studie*, February 1992, p. 5. [Ed. note: For an English translation of the report, see Mark Kramer, trans. and annot., "Warsaw Pact Military Planning in Central Europe: Revelations From the East German Archives," *CWIHP Bulletin* 2 (Fall 1992), pp. 1, 13-19.]

²⁹ Militarisches Zwischenarchiv (Potsdam), VA-Strausberg/29555/Box 155.

³⁰ "Dohoda CSSR-ZSSR o vzajemnykh dodavkakh vyzbroje a voj. tekhniky v rr. 1963-1965," in VHA Praha, F. Sekretariat MNO, 1960-1962, OS/GS, 26/2.

³¹ "Dogovor mezhdru pravitel'stvami SSSR i ChSSR o merakh povysheniya boegotovnosti raketnykh voisk," 15 December 1965, in VHA Praha, F. Sekretariat MNO, 1960-1962, OS/GS, 2/16.

³² See the reports on "Hungary: USSR Nuclear Weapons Formerly Stored in Country," translated in U.S. Joint Publications Research Service,

Nuclear Proliferation, JPRS-TND-91-007, 20 May 1991, pp. 14-16.

³³ "O przedsiewzieciu majacym na celu podwyzszenie gotowosci bojowej wojska," 25 February 1967, in Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe, Paczka 6, Tom 234.

³⁴ Interview with chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, Major-General Karel Pezl, in Jan Bauer, "Jaderna munice: Asi tady byla," *Ceske a moravskoslezske zemedelske noviny* (Prague), 4 July 1991, p. 1.

³⁵ See, e.g., Col.-General I. Glebov, "Razvitie operativnogo iskusstva," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 2 April 1964, pp. 2-3; and Col.-General S. M. Shtemenko, "Sukhoputnye voiska v sovremennoi voine i ikh boevaya podgotovka," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 3 January 1963, pp. 2-3. See also Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii *et al.*, *Voennaya strategiya*, 2nd ed. (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1963), pp. 373-4. This theme is also evident in "Razvitie voennogo iskusstva v usloviyakh vedeniya raketno-yadernoi voyny po sovremennym predstavleniyam," *passim*.

³⁶ See, e.g., Col.-General N. Lomov, "Vliyanie Sovetskoi voennoi doktriny na razvitie voennogo iskusstva," *Kommunist vooruzhenykh sil* (Moscow), No. 21 (November 1965), pp. 16-24.

³⁷ Cited in "Rech' tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva," *Pravda* (Moscow), 25 September 1965, p. 2 (emphasis added).

³⁸ "Stenografische Niederschrift der Konferenz der kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien die Staaten des Warschauer Vertrages," January 1965 (Top Secret), in Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMDB), Zentrales Parteiarchiv (ZPA) der SED, J IV, 2/202/130.

³⁹ "O zasedanii Politicheskogo konsul'tativnogo komiteta gosudarstv-uchastnikov Varshavskogo Dogovora o družbe, sotrudnichestve i vzaimnoi pomoshchi," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 21 January 1965, p. 1. See also Colonel V. F. Samoilenko, *Osnova boevogo soyuza: Internatsionalizm kak faktor oboronnoi moshchi sotsialisticheskogo sodruzhestva* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1981), p. 259.

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Marshal R. Ya. Malinovskii, "Moguchii strazh bezopasnosti narodov," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 13 May 1965, p. 3; Marshal A. A. Grechko, "Nadezhnyi shchit mira i bezopasnosti narodov," *Kommunist vooruzhenykh sil* (Moscow), No. 9 (May 1965), p. 13; and Marshal A. A. Grechko, "Boevoi soyuz bratskikh narodov," *Pravda* (Moscow), 13 May 1965, p. 1.

⁴¹ "Informacna sprava o vysledkach cviceniya 'Oktobrova Burka,'" 16-22 October 1965 (Top Secret), in VHA Praha, F. Hlavna Politicka Sprava (HPS), 1965, HPS 1/2.

⁴² "Konferenz der kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien die Staaten des Warschauer Vertrages: Stenografische Niederschrift," February 1966 (Top Secret), in SAPMDB, ZPA, IV 27/208/85.

⁴³ "Oplot mira i sotsializma," *Krasnaya zvezda* (Moscow), 14 May 1966, p. 5.

⁴⁴ "La Roumanie n'a formule aucune demande en ce qui concerne le Pacte de Varsovie: Mise au Point du ministere des Affaires etrangeres a Bucarest," *L'Humanite* (Paris), 19 May 1966, p. 3.

⁴⁵ "Stenografische Niederschrift des Treffens führender Repräsentanten der Bruderstaaten des Warschauer Vertrages," July 1966 (Top Secret), in SAPMDB, ZPA, IV 2/202/431.

⁴⁶ "Kompleksny material: Cvicenie 'VLTAVA,'" in VHA Praha, F. HPS, 1966, HPS 30/2; and "Vyhodnotenie cviceniya 'VLTAVA,'" VHA Praha, F. Sekretariat MNO, 1966, OS/GS, 4/2.

⁴⁷ Maksimov *et al.*, eds., *Raketnye voiska strategicheskogo naznacheniya*, pp. 125-126.

⁴⁸ See, e.g., *ibid.*, pp. 125-6. See also "Razvitie voennogo iskusstva v usloviyakh vedeniya raketno-yadernoi voyny po sovremennym predstavleniyam," pp. 325-34.

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 330-36 and *passim*.

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