

November 2, 1962
Telegram from A.I. Mikoyan to CC CPSU re 1
November 1962 meeting with Stevenson

Citation:

"Telegram from A.I. Mikoyan to CC CPSU re 1 November 1962 meeting with Stevenson", November 2, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVPRF; trans. V. Zaemsky; copy on file at National Security Archive

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Summary:

Mikoyan discusses the results of a meeting with Stevenson. The two discussed the quarantine in Cuba, the dismantling of weapons, the possibility of the Soviets and Americans coming to agreements over the issues to be discussed by the UN Security Council and the possibility of normalization of relations with Cuba in the future.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

[...] 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 intend 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 airspace." 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.]