

November 4, 1962 Meeting of the Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba with Mikoyan in the Presidential Palace

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Summary:

Minutes of the meeting between Anastas Mikoyan, Fidel Castro, and other members of the Secretariat of the ORI in the Old Presidential Palace. The purpose of this meeting is to resolve differences between the Cuban and Soviet governments in order to protect Marxist principles. Among other things, they discuss economic sanctions against Cuba, military intervention by other Latin American countries, the importance of the Cuban revolution to Marxism, and Cuba's relationship with the United States.

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REUNION DEL SECRETARIADO DE LA O.R.I. CON MIKOYAN EN EL PALACIO PRESIDENCIAL EL DOMINGO 4 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 1962.

Preambulo de Mikoyan:

Dice que viene a Cuba a discutir las diferencias con los compañeros cubanos y no a nada de lo que afirman los imperialistas. Que ellos tienen tanta confianza
en nosotros como en ellos mismos. Que esta dispuesto a discutir tanto tiempo como sea necesario para resolver las diferencias. Que los intereses de la Unión Soviética son comunes
con los nuestros tanto en la defensa de los principios del -marxismo-lenimismo como en todos los demas intereses.

Fidel: Hace un resumen de nuestras diferencias en cuanto a-los procedimientos empleados en la tramitación de esta crisis.

Dorticós: Plantea que si Mikoyan considera que se han obtenido realmente las garantías que el Presidente Kennedy ofreció.

Carlos: Plantea que si ya se ha obtenido la victoria de que--

MIKOYAN: Dice que va a responder, que lo perdonen porque va a hablar largo. Que va a partir de las dudas expresadas por -- Fidel para tratar de explicarlas.

considera que el-problema principal consiste en explicar por qué han enviado tropas y armas estratégicas porque si nose entiende esto es muy dificil comprender el resto de la situación. El no pensaba que teníamos dudas sobre esto. Dijo: "El destino de la Revolución Cubana nos preocupa constantemen te especialmente desde que se declaró su carácter socialista. Cuando la derrota del imperialismo en Girón esto nos alegró mucho pero nos preocupó también. Los yanquis hicieron una — cosa tonta pero sabíamos que iban a seguir molestando porque— Cuba es un ejemplo que ellos no podían tolerar. Nos parecíaque tenían dos planes paralelos el primero consistía en estran gular a Cuba económicamente para que el régimen cayera sin — intervención militar. El segundo consistía en una intervención organizada por los gobiernos latinoamericanos con su —— apoyo, en una alternativa para el plan anterior.

Consideramos que la victoria de la Revolución Cubana esuna enorme aportación al marxismo leninismo y su pérdida sería un daño irreparable para el marxismo y para los movimientos revolucionarios en otros países. Esa derrota significaría una preponderancia del imperialismo sobre el socialismo en el --mundo. Una derrota así significaría un golpe tremendo para la revolución en todo el mundo. Rompería la correlación de fuerza. Es nuestro deber hacer todo para defender a Cuba. "Nuestros camaradas nos comunicaban que la situación económica en Cuba se empeoraba debido a la presión yanqui y los enormes gastos de la Defensa. Eso nos preocupaba porque eso coincidía con los planes yanquis. Discutimos ese empeoramiento económico y sin pedido de ustedes, hemos ayudado. Ustedesson modestos en sus pedidos y nosotros tratamos de ayudarles.Decidimos entregarles las armas gratis y darles equipos para cien
mil hombres. Además nuestras negociaciones comerciales hemosvisto sus posibilidades y hemos tratados de entregar todo lo que
necesitaban sin pago en mercancías y hemos entregado 180 millones de rublos con el fin de ayudarles. Esto es una segunda eta
pa de ayuda pues antes existían créditos y comercios pero ahora
estas entregas son para ayudarles.

Cuando Jruschov estuvo en Bulgaria de visita nos ha referi do muchas cosas, él dijo "aunque estuve en Bulgaria siempre estaba pensando en Cuba. Temo que los yanquis van a atacar a Cu-ba, directa o indirectamente e imaginanse el efecto para noso-tros de una derrota de la revolución en Cuba. Nosotros no podemos permitir esto de ninguna manera, aunque el plan es muy ---arriesgado para nosotros, ese Plan será de una responsabilidad-grande pues nos expone a la Guerra. Hay que salvar a Cuba." Estuvieron pensando tres días y después expresarón sus opiniones-todos los miembros del Comité Central. Hay que pensar mucho eneste acto para poder salvar a Cuba y no provocar una guerra termonuclear. Le encomendó a los militares que hicieran el Plan -y consultaran con los cubanos. Nos dijo que la condición prin-cipal era realizar el Plan de una manera secreta. Nuestros mi-litares dijeron que eran necesarios 4 meses para los preparati-vos. Pensamos que iban a enterarse los enemigos a la mitad del-Plan y hemos previsto que hacer. Pensamos que no se iba a terminar el Plan, pero que eso era una ventaja, pues las tropas ya -estarian en la Isla. Previmos que para no provocar una guerra,podíamos usar la ONU y la opinión pública. Pensamos que el Plan no provocaría una guerra sino un bloqueo por las armas y el combustible. ¿como resolver eso, si ustedes no tienen combustible? Teniendo en cuenta la situación geográfica de la Isla ha sido muy dificil evitar el bloqueo. Si estugieran más cerca hubieramos usado nuestra Fuerza aérea y nuestra Flota; pero no podíamos, los yanquis si tienen Bases rodeándonos en Murquia bloquean el -Mar Negro. Dada la situación nosotros no podemos dar un contragolpe, también Okinawa estaba muy lejos. La única posibilidadera cortar las comunicaciones con Berlín Occidental. En Berlínsi es posible.

No ma hemos pensado crear en la Isla una Base Soviética para actuar contra los americanos. En general consideramos que -- la política de Bases no es ma correcta. Solo tenemos bases en-Alemania, primero por el derecho de País vencedor y después por- el fratado de Varsovia. (Stalin sí tenía Bases en el Exterior). Antes hemos tenido en Finlandia y también en China (Puerto Arturo) esas Bases las hemos abandonado solo tenemos tropas en Hungría y Polonia para proteger las tropas de Alemania y las comunicaciones con Austria.

Para destruir los E.U. no necesitamos Bases pues podemos -- atacar con los cohetes emplazados en nuestro Territorio. No tenemos Plan para conquistir Norteamérica. Lo unico que tenemos --

que hacer, es acestar un contragolpe, pero eso va a servir para destruirlos sin mandar nuestras tropas.

Hemos mandado las tropas y los cohetes estratégicos solo-para defender la defensa de la Isla. Era un plan de contensión para que los yanquis no puedan provocar un incendio en Cuba. Si los cohetes estan bien camuflados y los yanquis no saben dondeestán emplacados, entonces si pueden servir para contenerlos. Los militares nos dijeron que en los bosques de palmas de Cuba, se podían esconder y los yanquis no los iban a localizar y porlo tanto no podrian destruirlos. En los meses de Julio y Agosto no descubrieron nada y solo en octubre-se han descubierto. A Prosotros nos asombraba que Kennedy solo se referia a Técnicos-y no a nuestras Tropas; en el principio por lo visto asi pensaba efectivamente y despues nosotros entendíamos que sabía más-que lo que decia, pero que callaba para no dificultar la campana electoral. Le hemos hecho entender a los yanquis que ibamos a resolver el problema de Berlín para distraer su atención so-bre aquel problema. No nos proponémos actuar en Berlin y des-pués puedo explicarles eso.

Por los canales diplomáticos se sabía que Kennedy no que-ría agravar la situación y nos pidió no tocar el problema de --Berlin antes de las elecciones. Le trasmitimos que estabamos-de acuerdo que lo íbamos a complacer, pero que despues, lo ibamos a solucionar. Consideramos conveniente complacerlo y ade-más no habíamos pensado en plantear este problema. Cuando losamericanos conocieron los transportes a Cuba, ellos también ----concentraron su campaña en Berlín. Los dos lados tenían su insterés principal en Cuba, pero aparecía concentrado en Berlín. -A mediados de octubre, los conocieron a traves de Cuba, por elservicio de información de Alemania Occidental que se los trasmitió a la CIA; primero conocieron lo de los cohetes. Ellos sa caron fotografías aéreas y los localizaron, Jruschov dió ins--trucciones de acostar los cohetes de día y solo tenerlos para-dos de noche pero por lo visto esto no se cumplió. Kennedy noquiso hablar de los cohetes hasta el final de las Elecciones, -pero dos Senadores del Partido Repúblicano, supieron la noticia y no le quedo más remedio que actuar. No sabiamos que iba a -hacer Kennedy y estabamos preocupados por las maniobras o pre-parativos de Vieti, una operación que llevaba el nombre de Castro pero al revés. Cuando Kennedy habló sobre el bloqueo, no-teníamos datos sobre si era maniobra o preparativos de agresión y el día 28 por la mañana recibimos la noticia que confirmaba que se trataba de una agresión, aunque fué anunciado que las ma niobras estaban suspendidas por una tempestad, la tempestad pasó y las maniobras no se efectuaba mientras que seguia la con--Jruschov le ha criticado duramente a Kennedy sus centración. palabras sobre el bloqueo no estaban de acuerdo en que clases-de armas debía tener en Cuba y entonces ellos prepararon la --agresión directa. Su plan se componía de dos partes: lro. Usar cohetes xx con cargas convencionales para destruir los cohetesnucleares y desembarcar para destruir la resistencia.

En este caso tendríamos la necesidad de contestarle porque es un ataque contra Cuba y contra nosotros también, porque aquí estaban nuestras tropas y este era el desencadenamiento de la -Guerra Mundial. Nosotros destruiríamos a Norteamerica. Ellos-

nos causarían grandes pérdidas; pero a Cuba, ellos se esforzarían por destruirla completamente. Todas las medidas que tomabamos — eran para defender a Cuba y que resultaría si se llevaba a cabo— este plan de los yanquis? ¿Perder a Cuba, causar grandes daños — a los países Socialistas con una guerra termonuclear? Cuando estabamos discutiendo, recibimos un cable de Fidel que coincidía — con otras informaciones en el mismo xxxx sentido. Desde ese momento, quedaban unas diez o doce horas y puesto que quedaba tan— poco tiempo, hemos usado los medios diplomáticos, pues los polí— ticos si quieren evitar la guerra tienen que usar los medios Di— plomáticos. Es importante recalcar, que Kennedy xxx dice abora, — que él no está en contra de la presencia de tropas aquí y admite, conetes tierra aire, pero las armas estratégicas al ser conocidas dejaron de ser útiles...... (Falta un párrafo).

La retirada de los cohetes, es una concesión de nuestra parte; pero Kennedy también hace una xxxxx concesión al permitir --- las demás armas soviéticas y además han declarado que no atacarían a Cuba y ni permitiran que la ataquen. Si sacamos la cuenta hemos ganado, pues no van a atacar a Cuba y no va a hacer guerra.

En condiciones normales sería natural que les mandaramos unproyecto para que ustedes lo estudiaran y despues lo publicaran,—
pero eso se puede hacer solo en condiciones normales. Se esperaba
una invasión en 24 horas. uando Fidel mandó su cable faltaban —
diez o doce horas, si se mandaba un cable había que cifrarlo, esollevaría más de 10 o 12 horas, la consulta se hubiera hecho bien,—
pero Cuba no existiría y el mundo se hubiera visto envuelto en una
guerra, despues del ataque, jamás ellos hubieran aceptado una tregua, debido a los guerreristas del Pentagono. Esa manera de actuar
nuestra, ha creado dificultades, pero si vamos a valorar todo, a—
pesar de los defectos sicológicos veremos que las ventajas son inne
gables.

El 6. Dorticós pregunta: ¿Que si se han obtenido realmente -- las garantías del ofrecimiento de Kennedy? Consideramos que no-se pueden rechazar todos los conveniso en forma nihilitas, porquelos convenios aunque se infringen, tienen su importancia, pues sirven durante un tiempo.

Además surgió un problema con lo de Turquía. ¿Por que incluímos el problema de Turquía y de las Bases? Nosotros no teníamos—en los Planes nuestros hablar sobre Turquía; pero cuando se dicutía ese problema, hemos recibido un artículo de Lipman diciendo que los rusos hablarían de eso, por eso lo incluímos. Las bases de Turquía no tienen ninguna importancia pues en caso de guerra serían destruídas. Hay bases también en Inglaterra. No solucionan el problema estas Bases, sino los cohetes estratégicos que pueden dañar todas las Bases en cualquier parte del Mundo.

Fidel pregunta; si hubo en realidad dos cartas, una que hablaba de lo de Turquía, que dió la Radio de Moscu y otra en que nos hablaba de eso. Nosotros hemos enviado dos carta, una el día 26, que no fué publicada y otra el día 27, al principio lo de Turquía no apareció, despues lo incluímos. Pero todo esto bodemos precisar

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10 mejor revisando los documentos. Hemos hablado sobre su pregunta de si no sería mejor el desmantelamiento de la Base Naval de Guantanamo. Eso sería mejor para Cuba, pero desde el puntode vista militar y desde el punto de vista de los intereses rea les de Cuba no se puede. Si nosotros decidieramos sacar todaslas armas de Cuba, entonces podíamos exigir la salida de Guanta namo; Guantanamo no tiene importancia desde el punto de vista militar. Eso sería mucho más peligroso y eso si tiene importan cia desde el punto de vista político. Ahora respecto a la inspección: Si nosotros dijeramos que rechazamos cualquier ins--pección el enemigo podía interpretar que queríamos engañarle, no se trata más que de ver los emplazamientos, donde estaban las armas y su embarque por unos días. Cuba estas en manos de los cubanes. Pero como éramos las propietarios de estas armas...... (Falta un parrafo). Habiamos pensado que usted, despues de -las consultae, ud. aceptaria la inspección. Pero de ninguna manera hemos pensado decidir algo por ustedes. ¿Por que pensabamos que se podía estar de acuerdo en la comprobación del desman telamiento por los neutrales, sin infringir la soberanía de ---Cuba? Se sobreentendia que ningún Estado aceptaria que se le-infringiese la soberanía. En casos determinados en Estado puede sus actos, por un acuerdo y no por presión del Exterior. He aqui un ejemplo, esos territorios de la Embajada en un Estado Soberano. Cuando en Ginebra se discutía el problemade Indochina sobre Vietnam se acordó crear una Comisión Inter-nacional de Control.

El problema del desmantelamiento lo hablamos con Mc Clay en New York. El dijo así .- "Puesto que Cuba está en contra de la inspección norteamericana no insistio en esta formula para que --ellos puedan comprobar que las armas no van a quedar escondidas en aggun bosque.

Les hablé de inspección f tográfica aérea, pero les conteste que Cuba tiene derecho a su espacio aéreo. Les dije que sus aviones han volado sobre Cuba y ustedes se convencieron de que el desman telamiento se realiza. Admitieron, pero señalaron que no está-todo terminado. Le dijimos que esto está llegando a su fin y no hablo más sobfe esto. Tenemos que convencernos de que no los van a ocultar en los bosques, no queremos datos que se refierana sus secretos militares, pero si la seguridad de que van a sa-lir los cohetes.

Les podemos entregar las fotos de las armas desmanteladas-y como se cargan las armas y tampoco vamos a tener nada en con-tra si en altamar a determinada distancia observan nuestro bar-cos. En las cubiertas van a ver algo. No les comunique esto -pero esa es nuestra opinión y les daremos xx materiales para que se convenzan de que hemos sacado los cohetes para nó estar en -contra de su declaración en contra de la inspección o del reco-nocimiento aéreo. Ellos temían que los cubanos no nos van a dejar sacar los cohetes puesto que tienen 140,000 y ustedes solo--10 mil hombres. No discutiá sobre estos números. Me dijo que-el U-2 que fué derribado aquí lo xxxx fué por cohetes rusos y--que probablemente manejadas por rusos aunque creen que hay cubanos capaces de manejar esas armas. Nosotros estabamos insistien do en que liquiden la cuarentena en el acto. Les dije si quieren ellos que se saquen los cohetes de Cuba más rapido deben abrir el bloqueo proque los barcos que hay en Cuba no puede sacar — esos cohetes. Les dije que debian dar instrucciones para que la inspección de los barcos sea sin subir nadie a la cubierta-del barco sino de manera simbólica preguntando por radio como-al pretrolero Bucarest,

Stevenson dijo que ellos aceptaran las proposiciones de -U.Thant. Le reprochamos que el propuso no transportar armas a Cuba y-liquidar el bloqueo. Nosotros hemos cumplido con esto y ellos prosiguen.

Nosotros tenemos pérdidas porque los barcos esperan en alta mar, las pérdidas son grandes por eso hemos dado el permiso al control de la Cuz Roja. La Cuz Roja es mejor porque es una institución no política ni estatal. U. Thant proponía dos inspecciones una en los puertos de llegada y otra en altamar. Nosotros no queriendo herir sus sentimientos hemos contestado que estamos dispuestos a la inspección en alta mar y no en los puertos. Un Thant al regreso de Cuba me dijo que ustedes no están de acuerdo aunque esa comprobación es más cómoda en los puertos. U. Thant esta listo esta escogiendo el personal ya tiene 2 barcos. No se más pues de esto se ocupa Kustnesov.

En esta situación Thant se ha portado bastante bien no sepuede pedir más dada sú situación incluso parece tener cierta -simpatía por nuestra posición. Estando en Moscú nosotros hemos recibido el Plan de Garantías. Este plan nos pareció interesante y útil para Cuba.

Por que: Si va a ser aprobada la inspección en Cuba, litoral Sur de EE.UU y otros países del Caribe, (América Central) -porque así se puede privar al agresor de la posibilidad de llevar a cabo sus propósitos. Claro que esto se puede burlar. A mi me ha interesado esta variante de de otro punto de vista. -Existe la OEA y es EE.UU quienes se aprovechan de ella para nousar la ONU pero si se aprueba este plan es la ONU la que va a tener que ver con esta parte de América lo que constituye un -golpe para la doctrina de Monroe. U.Thant dijo que representantes de los países latinoamericanos estan de acuerdocon este ---Plan, los norteamericanos rehuyen la contestación. Le pregun-té a Mc Cloy y me dijo al principio él y Stevenson mx que no --existe plan U. Thant pero despues descartaron la inspección en --Estados Unidos y que pueden dar su palabra de que en latino america todas los campos están liquidados. Le pregunté que si entodos y trato de evadir la pregunta. Dijeron que Cuba es una -infección revolucionaria dijo que los países de América Latina temen a Cuba. Se puede buscar una fórmula para que se declare-que Cuba abandona el trabajo clandestino a cambio de que ellos-no atacarán.

Fidel tenía razón cuando dijo que para la URRS es más fá-cil maniobrar y mantener una política flexible que a Cuba tanto más cuanto que la radio yanqui llega muy bien. No es justo -cuando se dice que somos más liberales. No se puedeperder la -Revolución de Cuba hay que hacer maniobras para salvar la Revolución siendo flexibles.

Haciendo una mirada retrospectiva surge la pregunta de si fué un error mandar los cohetes y despues sacarlos de laIsla. Nuestro Comité Central dice que esto no ha sido ningún
error. Consideramos que los cohetes hicieron su trabajo convirtiendo a Cuba en un foco de la política mundial. Despuesde ser fotografíados no pueden cumplir su papel de contención.

En América Latina mina ningún país tiene el poder que --tiene Cuba ningún bloque de América Latina puede derrotar a --Cuba.

Para entender en que reside la victoria se puede comparar faceituación de Cuba ahora y hace 4 meses (en Julio). La lra. y entaja es que los norteamericanos ya dejaron de hablar de la doctrina de Monroe y antes toda la base de su política en América Latina era esa doctrina.

Antes declaraban que no tolerarían la existencia de un -régimen marxista-leninista en América Latina, ahora ellos decla
ran que no van a atacar a Cuba. Antes no toleraban a un país -de fuera del Caribe y ahora saben de la existencia de especia-listas soviéticos y no dicen nada.

Antes no se podían obtener ninguna actuación de la ONU enpro de Cuba y ahora esta trabajando en ese sentido todos los -pueblos estan movilizados.

El prestigio del Campo Socialista ha crecido porque ha defendido la Paz. Aunque las EE.UU. pusieron al mundo al borde de la guerra la URSS por la vía pacífica logró salvar a Cuba -y la Paz.

La paz se ha logrado por varios años y hay que xxxxii consolidar a Cuba para que se siga construyendo el socialismo y -siga siendo el faro para América Latina.

El prestigio de Cuba ha crecido a consecuencia de estos -- acontecimientos.

Fidel pregunta si de acuerdo con su propuesta nos va a habar de la política Soviética en Berlín. Mikoyan accede pero en una -- entrevista posterior.

MEETING OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ORI 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 Companeros [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 yanguis 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 yanguis 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,[1] 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.[2] 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 loses 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 Soviet 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 been 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 loses 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.

[1] 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.

[2] 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).