

October 27, 1962

**Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to
USSR Ambassador to Cuba Alekseev**

Citation:

"Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to USSR Ambassador to Cuba Alekseev", October 27, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, 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 <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110998>

Summary:

A message from Gromyko to Alekseev to relay a message to Castro regarding American invasion.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

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."¹

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

1. 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 Havana, 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.