

November 6, 1962

Cable no. 350 from the Czechoslovak Embassy in Havana (Pavlíček)

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Summary:

Pavlicek communicates that Anastas Mikoyan's talk with the Cubans has suffered a personal setback with the loss of Mikoyan's wife. The results of the meeting between the Soviet and Cuban delegations remain unknown as of this cable. Pavlicek speaks of a proposal by Brazil to "Finlandize" Cuba, which would mean permanent Cuban neutrality and the end of the US base in Guantanamo Bay. Calm has taken over Cuba in the aftermath of Castro's speech on 1 November, although many still have reservations about the actions taken by the Soviet Union, and demand answers from Mikoyan.

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To Kurk.

The situation regarding [Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas] Mikoyan's talks with the Cubans has been complicated by the unexpected death of comrade Mrs. Mikoyan which has struck Mikoyan deeply. The first meeting did not take place until 4 November. The Cuban delegation includes Fidel [Castro], the President [Osvaldo Dorticos], Raúl Castro, Che Guevara, Carlos R. Rodriguez, and [Emilio] Aragones. For now the Soviet side is composed of Mikoyan, [Soviet Ambassador Aleksandr] Alekseev and the translator. The results are not yet known. [Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl] Roa, to whom I passed on news from Ghana, indicated that according to [Cuban UN Ambassador Carlos] Lechuga there reigns a great deal of confusion at the UN regarding the next developments, for there is no one or coordinated set of views. Therefore [UN Secretary-General] U Thant is postponing a meeting of the Security Council. The USA has not reduced pressures and is in fact continuing to concentrate forces in Florida, strengthen Guantanamo, the flight inspections and the blockade. It is expected that a meeting of the OEA [OAS; Organization of American States] on 6 November will bring some developments, at least from the perspective of the USA. According to Polák, there is much talk about the compromise proposal to "Finlandize" Cuba, a proposal which should be presented by Brazil. This would mean Cuban neutrality and an end to the base at Guantanamo. However, in reaction to some questions regarding Brazil's position, Roa said only that the Brazilians offer good services. There was a considerable calmness inside the country after Fidel's speech. However, many Cubans still retain considerable reservations about the USSR's actions, and they await Mikoyan's clarification. Security and defensive measures remain in effect and the people are prepared for a possible breach of faith by the USA.

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