

November 9, 1962

Cable no. 358 from the Czechoslovak Embassy in Havana (Pavlíček)

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Summary:

Mikoyan's talks with the Cubans appears to be stalling, according to Pavlicek. The Cuban delegation is adamant about Castro's 5 points, stubbornly refusing any inspection of the missile bases, especially by the UN. Pavlicek also reports on a reception held the previous day at the Soviet Embassy in Havana. It drew a large crowd, and was marked by "warm feelings and openness," but discussions of the Soviet Union's handling of the crisis remain in doubt.

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According to the preliminary, incomplete, and sketchy discussions with the Soviet friends and the Cubans, the talks between [Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas] Mikoyan and the Cubans are continuing in great detail and with a large dose of patience on the part of Mikoyan. The Cubans remain adamant about refusing inspections, even on the open ocean, and they are absolutely against UN inspections. They are focused on Fidel [Castro]'s 5 Points which they persistently push. [Carlos Rafael] Rodriguez's speech at the ceremonial meeting marking the 45th anniversary of [the Russian Revolution of] October [1917] carried the same spirit, as he markedly underlined the 5 Points and strongly glorified 26 July. His words expressing confidence in the Soviet government's support and greetings to [Soviet Premier] N.S. Khrushchev were reacted to very coolly by some [Cuban] government officials ([President Osvaldo] Dorticos, [Minister of Construction Osmany] Cienfuegos, [Commandante Jose Ramon] Fernandez, [Emilio] Aragonés), without applause. Yesterday's reception at the Soviet embassy drew huge numbers and the complete governmental delegation was marked by warm feelings and openness, but discussions still revealed the remains of doubtful tones regarding the USSR's approach. Sinhu [Xinhua-state Chinese press agency] is making a special effort to feed those feelings with his blatant nonsensical information in a bulletin that the local press willingly accepts. There was even a comment about a new Munich. Let us believe in a solution, although it is probable that some issues of prestige and self-complacency are difficult to overcome without solid political arguments. We are counting on the fact that Mikoyan will inform us of the results at the conclusion of the talks.

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