

January 7, 1963
**Memorandum from Mexican Delegation,
Organization of American States (OAS), Washington,
on Informal Remarks by US United Nations
Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson**

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Summary:

At the request of the United States, the Council of the Organization of American States met, acting provisionally as Organ of Consultation, in a secret session, with the objective of listening to a speech by U.S. United Nations Ambassador Adlai Stevenson in relation to the issue of Cuba.

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MEMORANDUM

This morning, at the request of the United States, the Council of the Organization [of American States] met, acting provisionally as Organ of Consultation, in a secret session, with the objective of listening to a speech by [US United Nations] Ambassador Adlai Stevenson in relation to the issue of Cuba.

After having initiated the session and immediately agreeing to a break, so as to be able to speak informally, the Ambassador announced that he was going to summarize the negotiations conducted by him, in New York, with the representatives of the Soviet Union, after the exchange of letters between President Kennedy and Mr. Khrushchev last October.

First he referred to the efforts aimed at replacing the quarantine established by the United States with an inspection by the International Red Cross. He reported that the USSR agreed that its boats would be inspected but that it could not do anything to make other nationalities of the Soviet bloc do the same. Another aspect, that he was examining at this stage of the conversations, related to whether representatives of the Red Cross should use a North American boat, a Soviet one, or one from a neutral country. He added that, by this time, the USSR had already withdrawn the offensive arms that it had in Cuba and begun to dismantle the corresponding platforms. Finally, an agreement was reached so that the missiles and bombers that were withdrawn, would go on the deck of the boats so that the United States could verify their withdrawal on the high seas easily. In this way, he added, 42 missiles of an "intermediate" range left Cuba. The North Americans were never able to see the nuclear cones [conos nucleares], but the government of this country has reason to believe the assurances that Russia has given it that they left Cuba in the first boat and that it set sail after the fundamental letter from Prime Minister Khrushchev.

The next point was the IL-28 bombers. After quite a lot of time and at the cost of great effort, [Anastas] Mikoyan persuaded "President Castro" to allow these bombers to leave, having the operation verified by means of reconnaissance and aerial photography. Immediately afterwards the United States lifted the quarantine.

There then still remained two aspects to the problem: (1) inspection on the ground to verify the departure of the offensive arms and (2) the guarantee that they would not be reinserted in Cuba.

Stevenson said that in view of Mikoyan's efforts with Castro, in relation to the inspection having failed, the Secretary General of the United Nations [U Thant] had suggested the establishment of a United Nations inspection system that would include the territory of the United States and countries of the Caribbean. The United States replied that if the inspection was not going to limit itself to Cuba, it would have to cover not only the United States and the Caribbean, but also Soviet ports. In this way, this chapter of the negotiation was brought to an end.

By then, the United States had become convinced that it was very doubtful that the United Nations could carry out an effective inspection on the ground. On the other hand, aerial reconnaissance had produced very good results. Even so, the North American plan was as unacceptable to the Soviet Union as the Soviet one was for the United States. As an example, Ambassador Stevenson alluded to the reference that the United States wanted to make to wish to continue flights by its airplanes over

Cuban territory and to the Soviet position that this was violating Cuban air space.

Given the way things were, presenting independent declarations to the Security Council was considered, but when they were examining the texts, the United States concluded that it would not be prudent to reopen the debate before the Security Council, where Cuba would be present and could take advantage of the opportunity to begin launching diatribes and insults again. Fortunately, Stevenson said, the USSR did not only share this point of view but, in fact, gave the appearance of having an even greater interest than the North American delegation of avoiding debate in the Security Council.

During the next stage, the possibility of sending a joint letter to Secretary General of United Nations was examined and, after this, what would be two separate letters with the interpretations of each government. This procedure did not meet with success either, however, as each Delegation considered the other's plan unacceptable.

Finally, both countries agreed to write a letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations, in which they thanked him for his efforts to help them find a solution to the crisis; they refer to the agreement that they reached as having been achieved "in considerable measure," and assure that, although it was not possible to resolve all debated points, they thought that the topic did not need to occupy the Security Council's attention. The note ended saying that the two governments entertained the hope that the differences that they had been able to settle helped to eliminate other difficulties that existed between both of them. This note, Ambassador Stevenson added, would be delivered tomorrow and immediately distributed to the Security Council. At the same time, he added, its text would be sent to the North American diplomatic missions throughout the Continent and respective Foreign Ministries.

Finishing his declaration, Ambassador Stevenson offered to answer any questions that members of the Council wanted to ask him.

The first to ask a question was the Alternate Representative from Uruguay to investigate what conclusion had been reached in relation to the presence of Russian troops in Cuba. Mr. Stevenson expressed that the Soviet Union had withdrawn at the very least a thousand soldiers of the twenty-one thousand that were calculated to have been in Cuba and he added that, naturally, despite these troops leaving, there was still a strong Soviet base in Cuba, [and] although it does not have nuclear weapons, undoubtedly it has existing and effective anti-aircraft equipment.

As it appeared that with this question the questioning had finished, Mr. [Edwin M.] Martin, Assistant Secretary of the Department of State for Latin [sic: Inter-] American Affairs, indicated that our Permanent Missions in New York were also going to be informed in the same way as had been done here in Washington. Mr. Stevenson expressed his thanks to his Latin American colleagues in New York for the support that they had offered and the advice that they had given him throughout the difficult negotiations.

In turn, Mr. Martin expressed that the negotiations with the Soviet Union were finished as of this morning, meaning that the problem of Cuba and its relations with American countries would continue to be a question for consideration in the Council. We should bear in mind, he said, that the Soviet [Union] could establish an offensive base in Cuba. The United States has reserved its right to aerial reconnaissance. The other members of the OAS would also have to keep on guard. Castro's policy, in relation to Latin America, Martin continued saying, had not changed at all: radio transmissions continue being aggressive and incite people to rebellion; Prime Minister Fidel Castro's speech, on 2 January [1963], was as "bellicose" as any other. My government, he added, will not allow any of our republics to be attacked and is ready to act where necessary. Our policy continues being the one outlined by President

Kennedy last 20 November in his press conference. He also alluded to the Miami speech. He finished saying that, for now, they do not have concrete proposals to make and that what is next is to undertake consultations to consider what measures can be taken.

The Alternate Representative of Venezuela recalled the declarations made by Mr. [U. Alexis] Johnson, Assistant Secretary of the Department of State for Political Affairs, made on 17 December [1962] before the Council (see the Delegation's oficio 1096 of this date) in the sense that the United States did not want to undertake any measure that could slow down negotiations but that now that these had finished, he wanted to know the North American opinion regarding the permanence of Russian troops in Cuba, and leaving this [Cuban] government alone, armed "ferociously" ["ferozmente"] as it was, and committing all sorts of subversive acts, of sabotage, etc.

Mr. Martin clarified that before the exchange of letters with the Soviet Union, the presence of Russian troops was ignored as these had not been included in the agreement, that, up to now, it had not been possible to support the notion that the term "offensive weapons," employed in the correspondence, included the troops; that until now it had not been possible to obtain a guarantee for the withdrawal on the part of the USSR and, lastly, that his government shared Venezuela's preoccupation.

In turn, the Argentine ambassador asked if there was any news about the Soviet Union's proposals or plans for the propagation of communism in America [i.e., the Western Hemisphere]. Mr. Martin declared that for now there were no indications that these activities were going to decrease.

The Argentine ambassador asked if there were signs that communist China would try to spread in America what he called the most aggressive doctrines of communism. Mr. Martin's answer was this was what they were trying to do around the whole world but that China does not count, in Latin America, on resources that the Soviet Union has.

The Uruguayan Representative asked to speak again to ask if it was considered useful for the Organ of Consultation to continue in "permanent session." Mr. Martin replied that this was one of the points that the Department of State wanted to consult other American Foreign Ministries about.

With an intervention by the Venezuelan Representative, who wanted to arrange a certain date for the next meeting of the Council acting as an Organ of Consultation, to which he was not given an answer, the session ended.

Washington, DC, 7 January 1963