

October 18, 1962
Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA
Dobrynin to the USSR MFA

Citation:

"Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to the USA Dobrynin to the USSR MFA", October 18, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVP RF, copy courtesy of NSA; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/111776>

Summary:

Dobrynin sends statements issued by Kennedy, Rusk, Taylor and Martin in a closed briefing for American media where they discussed the gravity of the Cuban issue.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

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On October 15-16 a closed briefing (i.e. "instructional meeting") for editors and leading observers of American newspapers, radio, and television was held at the State Department. According to information which we received, the USA policy toward Cuba occupied a major place in the work of the meeting. The essence of the statements of Kennedy, Rusk, Taylor, and Martin (aide to the Secretary of State) on this topic is summarized as follows:

1. "Don't joke about the idea of American intervention in Cuba," because such intervention would unavoidably prompt serious counter-measures from the USSR, if not directly aimed at the USA, then in other regions of the world, particularly in West Berlin; for many years [intervention] would complicate the mutual relations of the USA with the countries of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, and overall would create more problems than it solved.
2. At present Cuba is a political problem, and not a problem of security of the USA; thus, political, economic and other means are needed to solve it, rather than military. Proceeding from this, the USA intends to achieve the greatest possible political, economic, and moral isolation of Cuba from other Latin American countries and other countries of the "free world," and also hinder the provision of assistance to Cuba from Socialist countries in all possible ways (short of, however, a sea blockade). All this, in the calculations of the USA government, should cause serious economic and political complications for Cuba and ultimately (not in the coming weeks and months but in the next year or two) lead to the outbreak there of mass dissatisfaction and to huge anti-government demonstrations. The USA's concrete course in this case will depend on the situation.
3. At the present time the USA has no plans to create "a provisional Cuban government in exile," since in view of the mixed nature of the Cuban emigration it would be hardly possible to form a sufficiently authoritative government and in any case such a government, created on foreign territory, could not count on broad popularity among the population of Cuba itself; in the same way the recognition of an exile government by the United States "would confuse" the issue of the American base at Guantanamo, depriving the USA of the formal right to demand of Castro's government recognition of Cuba's obligations re: the agreement about that base.
4. In spite of all the importance of the Cuba issue, it is not the main issue for the USA. The West Berlin issue at present remains sharpest and most fraught with dangers.

18/X-62 A.DOBRYNIN [Source: AVP RF, copy courtesy of NSA; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff.]