

October 26, 1962

Telegram from Fidel Castro to N. S. Khrushchev

Citation:

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Summary:

In his message to Khrushchev, Fidel Castro evaluated the two possible scenarios of American aggression against Cuba. Castro seems to suggest a retaliatory nuclear strike against the US in the case of an attack on Cuba.

Credits:

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Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Dear Comrade KHRUSHCHEV,

In analyzing the situation that has arisen through the information at our disposal, it seems that aggression in the next 24 to 72 hours is almost inevitable.

Two variants of this aggression are possible:

1. The most likely one is an air attack on certain installations, with the aim of destroying those installations.
2. A less likely, but still possible variant is a direct invasion of the country. I believe that the realization of this variant would require large forces, and that this may hold the aggressors back; moreover such an aggression would be met with indignation by global public opinion.

You can be sure that we will offer strong and decisive resistance to whatever form this aggression may take.

The morale of the Cuban people is exceptionally high, and will face the aggression heroically.

Now I would like to express in a few words my deeply personal opinion on the events which are now occurring.

If an aggression of the second variant occurs, and the imperialists attack Cuba with the aim of occupying it, then the danger posed by such an aggressive measure will be so immense for all humanity that the Soviet Union will in circumstances be able to allow it, or to permit the creation of conditions in which the imperialists might initiate a nuclear strike against the USSR as well.

I say this because I believe that the aggressiveness of the imperialists is becoming extremely dangerous.

If they initiate an attack on Cuba -- a barbaric, illegal, and amoral act-- then in those circumstances the moment would be right for considering the elimination of such a danger, claiming the lawful right to self-defense. However difficult and horrifying this decision may be, there is, I believe, no other recourse. This opinion of mine has been formed by the emergence of an aggressive policy in which the imperialists ignore not only public opinion but all principles and rights as well: they blockade the sea, they violate air space, they are preparing an attack, and moreover they are destroying all possibilities for negotiations, even though they are aware of the gravity of the consequences.

You have been and remain a tireless defender of peace, and I understand how difficult these hours are for you, when the results of your superhuman efforts in the struggle for peace are so gravely threatened.

However, we will keep hoping up to the last minute that peace will be maintained, and we will do everything in our power to pursue this aim, but at the same time -we are realistically evaluating the situation, and are ready and resolved to face any ordeal.

I once again express our whole country's endless gratitude to the Soviet people, who have shown such brotherly generosity towards us. We also express our admiration and deep thanks to you personally, and wish you success in your immense and crucial endeavor.

With brotherly greetings,

FIDEL CASTRO. "