

**November 28, 1962**  
**Telegram from Polish Embassy in Havana,  
Conversation with Cuban Vice President Carlos  
Rafael Rodrigue**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Summary of comments made by Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez on the Cuban Missile Crisis. Rodriguez criticizes the Soviet Union's decision to withdraw its missiles, questioning the Soviet commitment to the defense of Cuba.

**Credits:**

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Polish

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Ciphergram No. 17421

From Havana dispatched on 11.28.1962 at 23:00 and it was received at 11.29 at 12:22

Came to the Decoding Department at 11.28 at 15:50

To: [Aleksander] KRAJEWSKI[1], Urgent

From: [Ambassador Bolesław] JELEŃSKI[2]

[Here are] the statements of [Vice President] C.R. Rodriguez [which he made] during his conversation with Leopold Unger[3] on [November] 27:

It is possible that the USSR made a mistake by sending the missiles. Cuba did not ask for anything. The withdrawal [of the missiles] was surely a mistake. (In addition, the justification of the agreement to introduce the missiles was described in our ciphergram no. 493, point 1).

. The procedure that was adopted during the making of the decision about the withdrawal and agreement from October 28 to carry out the inspections is not acceptable to a sovereign nation [like Cuba], and it led to an open conflict between Moscow and Havana.

. Kennedy's guarantees have no value and therefore Soviet concessions are unilateral and ineffective. The only appropriate reply would have had to have been force to force. The main element of the European policy is, after all, fear of war and this [attitude] can lead to mistakes. In case of Cuba, Americans wouldn't have gone to war. The shaky and weak position of the USSR facilitated the success of the imperialist policy of the United States.

. The U.S. does not opt for an invasion, not out of fear of an armed response from the USSR, but because this kind of an operation would be too costly both militarily and politically.

. When it comes to the analysis of the facts, as well as the fundamental issues, then the talks with Mikoyan have amounted to nothing. The crux of the differences lies in the understanding of the issue of the coexistence with imperialism and the main conflict of our era. From the point of view of national liberation movements in Latin America, the way the [Cuban Missile] crisis has been resolved means one step backwards. The policy carried out by the USSR toward the colonial revolutions is either erroneous or the USSR simply does not have one. The examples of Congo, Guinea, Algeria, and now Cuba, testify that the USSR does not possess a correct concept of aiding the revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements. At some point, Molotov counted Cuba within the territory of the United States, and now Mikoyan implied the right of the United States to make decisions on behalf of the Central American countries without even taking into account a formal sovereignty of these nations.

. The fact that the authority and position of Mikoyan did not enable a fruitful exchange of opinions on fundamental issues, does not mean that they won't go back to them when the right time comes. This time, the conversation boiled down to concrete issues for the future, the overall tactics in the UN, the content of joint proposition, etc.

. The fact that the Soviet press and that of other socialist countries did not publish the excerpts from the speech made by Castro on November 1 about the differences [between Cuba] and the USSR caused a negative impression among the Cuban leadership. [However], the fact that the Polish press did not omit this excerpt is seen by R[odriguez] as a very positive one, especially from the point of view of providing reliable information.

. The main question at the moment is not the issue of [obtaining] the guarantees from the U.S., but the guarantees from the USSR and the degree of its commitment to defend Cuba. The position of the USSR is not known at the moment; this issue will be broached by Cuba at the appropriate time and at a proper forum. The revolutionary forces of Latin America are faced with two issues: the effective economic aid from the USSR and military defense. The second issue turned out to be impossible and therefore the only way out is Cuba's active policy, [because] one has to respond to

the policy of imperialist aggression with a policy of the armed struggle. Therefore, the second Havana declaration is still valid. [This declaration] does not mean the export of a revolution, but a possibility of assistance to the existing and active revolutionary movements [which can only] be headed by the working class.

. The fact that the weapons had been removed from Cuba caused disastrous psychological consequences, as well as anti-Soviet moods. The authorities of the [Cuban] republic are faced with a challenging task of restoring the sympathy towards the USSR.

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[1] Official in the Polish Foreign Ministry. In 1950-1951, he served as the Vice-Chair of the Administrative and Budgetary Committee of the UN General Assembly. In 1965-1970, he served as Poland's ambassador to Brazil.

[2] Poland's Ambassador to Cuba (1961-1965)

[3] Leopold Unger (1922 -2011) was a Polish journalist, columnist and essayist who left Poland in 1969, permanently settling in Brussels, Belgium.