

October 20, 1962

Telegram from Polish Embassy in Washington (Drozniak)

Citation:

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Summary:

Drozniak compiles information he has collected from US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs William R. Tyler and US Ambassador at Large Llewellyn E. Thompson on the rising Cuban situation and US-USSR relations.

Credits:

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Original Language:

Polish

Contents:

Translation - English

Ciphergram No. 15522

Dispatched from Washington, D.C., on 10.2[0].1962 at 13:00 and received on 10.21.1962 at 00:10

Came to the Decoding Department on 10.21.1962 at 00:30

To: [Foreign Ministry Director Eugeniusz] MILNIKIEL,¹ EYES ONLY

From: [Ambassador Edward] DROŻNIAK²

Our [cable] 786.

...

2. [This information has been compiled based on the statements of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs William R.] Tyler: The aim of the United States is to avoid a total nuclear war. They are focusing on the production of missile defense weapons. They are foreseeing that in the near future all of the bombers will be fully eliminated. Presumably, China will constitute the gravest danger in the next ten years. They are getting ready to use tactical nuclear weapons in case of the conflicts in Asia. This will not be as dangerous as using such weapons in Europe. They are not planning a [military] invasion of Cuba, [because] this would require a much greater effort than last year.³

3. [This information has been compiled based on the statements of Ambassador at Large, Department of State, Llewellyn E.] Thompson:⁴ [Joseph V.] Stalin was a cynic. [Soviet leader Nikita S.] Khrushchev is "a flexible believer in Marxism." During the last year of Thompson's stay in the Soviet Union [as ambassador, from July 1961-July 1962] the pace of change, which began since the death of Stalin [in 1953], has clearly accelerated. The much stronger [Soviet] support for Cuba can be dated to Khrushchev's visit to Beijing.⁵ The Cuban ambassador [stationed] in Moscow was much more interested in Beijing and wanted to be transferred there. It is easier for the USSR to provide military than economic aid to Cuba, because they possess a lot of outdated military equipment. When asked about Khrushchev's opinion regarding Kennedy, he said: "Khrushchev envies Kennedy his youth. He realizes that there is not much time left for him to carry out the goals he set out for himself. He changed his opinion of Kennedy after their meeting in Vienna [in June 1961]. Kennedy made a strong impression on him; he treats him now as a serious politician and a partner."

[1] Eugeniusz Milnikiel (1905 -1969), former Polish ambassador to Great Britain (1953 -1956).

[2] Edward Drożniak (1902 - 1966), Poland's Ambassador to the United States (1961-1966).

[3] The reference here is to the failed Bay of Pigs invasion launched in April 1961 and carried out by CIA-trained Cuban exiles.

[4] Llewellyn E. "Tommy" Thompson (1904 - 1972), John F. Kennedy's Adviser for Soviet Affairs and former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union; he served as ambassador to the Soviet Union twice: 1957 - 1962 and 1967 - 1969.

[5] The reference here is to Khrushchev's visit to Beijing in October 1959 (following his successful visit to the United States in September 1959 during which he met President Dwight D. Eisenhower), the last visit which the Soviet leader paid to China and the last visit with Chinese leader Mao Zedong.