

October 29, 1962
Telegram from Polish Embassy in Havana (Jeleń), 29
October 1962

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Summary:

Jelen relays information on several recent diplomatic actions of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

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To: KRAJEWSKI, Urgent, EYES ONLY

From: [Ambassador Boleslaw] JELEN1

The only direct and official reaction to the USSR's decision to withdraw the military installations is yesterday's speech by Raul Castro in Santiago. Overall, he outlines the USSR's position as calm and reasonable. He reminds that the oral commitment of the United States [not to invade Cuba] is not sufficient. At the same time, he states that the liquidation of the Guantanamo base must take place sooner than later, but through peaceful means.

Based on the information from various sources it would seem that Fidel is not pleased with how the decision to withdraw [the missiles] was made and the disclosure that the installations are exclusively the property of the USSR. One can sense much bitterness on the part of Cubans regarding these issues. It is noteworthy that the prestige of Fidel Castro could seriously suffer within the Latin American context. I do not exclude the fact that the "five conditions" (see our cable no. 437 point 3) were also Fidel Castro's reaction to the Soviet position.

My forecast as far as tomorrow's talks with U Thant: they will be rather difficult. There is said to be an especial envoy on the way sent by [Brazilian leader João] Goulart who is carrying a letter to Fidel.

The Yugoslav ambassador [Boško Vidaković] thinks that he was the one to relay a proposition from Tito to [Cuban President Osvaldo] Dorticos of inviting U Thant and that this influenced Fidel's letter from the 27th which contained this invitation.

[1] Poland's ambassador to Cuba (1961-1965).