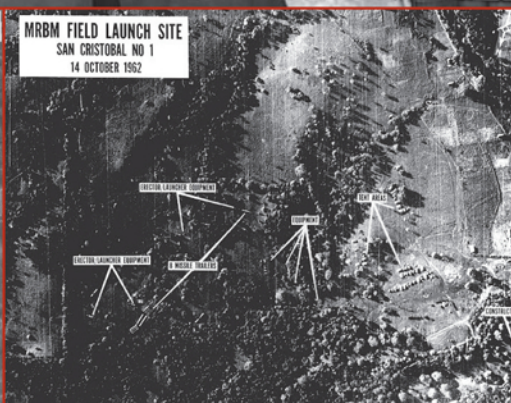
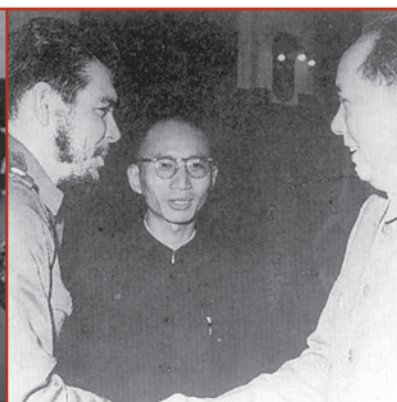


COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT

BULLETIN

The Global Cuban Missile Crisis at 50 New Evidence From Behind the Iron, Bamboo, and Sugarcane Curtains, and Beyond



Featuring new evidence on:

- * When Che Met Mao
- * Behind Closed Kremlin Doors
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- * The Soviet-Cuban Missile Crisis
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- * Cuba and the Sino-Soviet Split
- * Would-Be Mediators? Brazilian, Polish, Dutch...
- * Raul Castro in Eastern Europe, Kossygin in Havana

Published in cooperation with the National Security Archive • Edited by James G. Hershberg and Christian F. Ostermann



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Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) was established at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., in 1991 with the generous support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. It is directed by Christian F. Ostermann, who oversees the Wilson Center's History and Public Policy Program.

The Project supports the full and prompt release of historical materials by governments on all sides of the Cold War, and seeks to accelerate the process of integrating new sources, materials and perspectives from the former "Communist bloc" with the historiography of the Cold War which has been written over the past few decades largely by Western scholars reliant on Western archival sources. It also seeks to transcend barriers of language, geography, and regional specialization to create new links among scholars interested in Cold War history.

Among the activities undertaken by the Project to promote this aim are a periodic Bulletin and other publications to disseminate new findings, views, and activities pertaining to Cold War history; a fellowship program for young historians from the former Communist bloc countries to conduct archival research and study Cold War history in the United States; and international scholarly meetings, conferences, and seminars.

CWIHP receives funding from the Korea Foundation (Seoul), the MacArthur Foundation (Chicago), the Karl and Martha Mautner Fund, the Carnegie Corporation (New York), the Leon Levy Foundation (New York), the Blavatnik Family Foundation (New York), and other donors.

Donations to the project are very welcome and, like all contributions to the Wilson Center, are tax-deductible.

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From the CWIHP Director



The Cold War International History Project is pleased to present this issue of the CWIHP *Bulletin* on “The Global Cuban Missile Crisis.” Timed for publication on the 50th anniversary of this most dangerous Cold War crisis this October, the issue continues the Project’s mission to enrich scholarship and public policy debate through new archival evidence from inaccessible (or less easily accessible) archives around the world.

This issue features sources on the Cuban Missile Crisis from more than twenty countries: Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany (East and West), Hungary, Italy, Israel, Mexico, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, and North Vietnam. *In toto* they will, we hope, contribute to internationalizing the history of the crisis—with respect to decision-making drama during the crisis centered in Moscow, Washington and Havana, as well as its near global ripples and reverberations that made themselves felt in such distant corners as Pyongyang and Hanoi. Three major introductions set the historiographic scene for these materials. Shorter introductions and editorial notes provide first analytic cracks at the sources.

A centerpiece of the issue—“Sino-Cuban Relations and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1960-62”—grows out of the remarkable archival opening at Foreign Ministry Archive of the People’s Republic of China in recent years. Since 2004, CWIHP has supported this process in cooperation with Chinese scholars (centered especially around the Cold War Studies Center at East China Normal University). Based on agreements with the Foreign Ministry since 2005, CWIHP has been releasing and will continue to release major new tranches of documentation on China’s Cold War era foreign policy. In August 2011, CWIHP and East China Normal University launched the Wilson Center-ECNU Cold War Studies Initiative designed to bring junior and senior Chinese scholars to Washington for archival and other research. A special China portal on CWIHP’s website at www.cwihp.org will feature many of these collections.

The documents in this issue will also be available through CWIHP’s new state-of-the-art Digital Archive database, content management system and website which—once launched later this year—will transform and improve the storage, description, and searchability of our online collections. CWIHP is in the final year of a three-year development

and digitization project funded by the Leon Levy Foundation (New York), H.F. “Gerry” Lenfest and the Blavatnik Family Foundation (New York), as a result of which CWIHP’s newly digitized collections will be accessible through a new, visually dynamic and user-friendly website.

As part of the Wilson Center’s History & Public Policy Program, CWIHP continues to be joined at the hip with the Korea Foundation-funded North Korea International Documentation Project (NKIDP) in exploring former Communist-world archives on North Korea’s politics and foreign policy. Similarly, CWIHP is expanding its “collection scope” with a focus on the international history of nuclear proliferation through a Carnegie Corporation-funded Nuclear Proliferation International History Project (NPIHP).

As all CWIHP productions, this issue is a collaborative enterprise. As editor, my particular thanks go to Jim Hershberg who returned to CWIHP as a guest editor for this issue with his boundless enthusiasm, expertise and energy for the subject; and Tom Blanton and Malcolm Byrne and their team at the National Security Archive who helped to obtain many of the documents featured in this issue for a path-breaking set of critical oral history conferences in Havana in 2001-2002. I am grateful to the contributors, translators and researchers of this issue, including Alex Barrow, Pierre Asselin, Jordan Baev, Csaba Bekes, Bastiaan Bouwman, Phil Brenner, Christopher Dunlap, Piero Gleijeses, Malgorzata Gnoinska, Peer Henrik Hansen, Tanya Harmer, Hans-Herman Hertle, Adolf Kotlik, Mark Kramer, Guy Laron, Garret Martin, Hirata Masaki, Tim Naftali, Leopoldo Nuti, Silvio Pons, Stephanie Popp, Sergey Radchenko, Svetozar Rajak, Bernd Schaefer, Regina Schmidt-Ott, Marty Sherwin, Rimko van der Maar, Ruud van Dijk, Oldrich Tuma, David Wolff, Qian Zhang, Shen Zhihua, and Vlad Zubok. We greatly appreciate the support of the Karl and Martha Mautner Fund.

At the Center, my work as CWIHP director has benefited from the support of The Hon. Jane Harman, President, Director and CEO of the Wilson Center, Michael Van Dusen, Rob Litwak, Peter Reid and his wonderful design team, in particular Diana Micheli. Last but not least, I owe thanks to my talented and dedicated staff at the Project: James Person, Tim McDonnell, Laura Deal, Allison Lyalikov, Pieter Biersteker, Charles Kraus, and Kristina Terzieva. All of them have played critical roles in assuring that this issue came out in time and in good shape. They in turn have been supported by an extraordinary group of research assistants and junior scholars this past spring and summer: Kian Byrne, Daniel Chardell, Chandler Grigg, Jordan Harms, Yuree Kim, David Najmi, Phan Ngoc, Emily Olsen, and Benjamin Venable.

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The Global Cuban Missile Crisis—Surfing the Third Wave of Missile Crisis Scholarship

By James G. Hershberg

For the first quarter-century following the events of October 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis was primarily recounted, analyzed, and understood through an American lens. A vivid (and usually heroic) narrative emerged, centered on the deliberations and decision-making of John F. Kennedy and his advisors around the table of the “Excomm,” from the memoirs, recollections, and leaks of former US officials.¹

In 1971, political scientists Graham T. Allison consolidated these mostly American versions of what had happened into an influential secondary study, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*.² A few years after that, millions of TV viewers experienced (or re-lived) the brush with World War III through a docudrama, “The Missiles of October,” in which actors playing JFK and RFK—William Devaney and Martin Sheen, with exquisite Kennedy accents—guided their nation, and the world, along and then away from the brink of nuclear destruction. In all of these accounts, the communist adversary Nikita Khrushchev mostly loomed off-stage, a mysterious, menacing presence in Moscow, although the emergence of his smuggled-out memoirs at least offered a tantalizing glimpse into the Soviet side of the story. (Fidel Castro, in Havana, barely rated a mention, widely viewed as an after-thought and a mere Kremlin stooge.)

Exactly twenty-five years later—and exactly twenty-five years ago—all this began to change. In October 1987, against the backdrop of Mikhail Gorbachev’s glasnost, a conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis featured, for the first time, alongside surviving veterans of the Kennedy Administration, three authentic Soviet witnesses: the sons of Khrushchev and his closest associate, Anastas Mikoyan, and a former Khrushchev speechwriter. After decades of pervasive secrecy (and stolid Soviet spokesmen like foreign minister Andrei “Grim Grom” Gromyko), the spectacle of authentic Kremlin insiders thoughtfully, cordially, even cheerfully relating anecdotes and analyzing the crisis was a thrilling novelty, promising further revelations. And the next five years of “critical oral history” conferences organized by James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, including gatherings in Moscow and then Havana, indeed yielded a slew of findings from Soviets (i.e., Russians, after the USSR vanished at the end of 1991) and even Cubans, including Fidel Castro.³ For the past two decades, even as more American sources continued to stream out (especially more Excomm tapes and transcripts, various intelligence materials, and FRUS volumes), this “second wave” of Missile

Crisis research and scholarship has profited from the release of Soviet sources, via both oral history conferences and the tentative opening of Moscow archives.⁴ This deluge of new information from the “other side” has yielded a narrative and historiography far more balanced in its depiction of actions and decisions of *both* superpowers. Two particularly important secondary works, Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali’s *One Hell of a Gamble* (1997) and Michael Dobbs’ *One Minute to Midnight* (2008), finally superseded Allison’s *Essence of Decision* as standard secondary works by exploiting this increasingly rich Russian source, and by bringing the Cubans into the drama as autonomous (and at times angry) actors, not mere Soviet pawns.⁵

This, then, is the Third Wave—the most extensive collection ever presented of original, never-before published, non-US primary sources on the Cuban Missile Crisis, including translated archival documents and other sources from more than twenty countries: Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, East and West Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, and North Vietnam.⁶

Over the past two decades, there have been some scattered efforts to decentralize Cuban Missile Crisis historiography, to widen the aperture of analysis by examining it from perspectives other than Washington or Moscow.⁷ But this collection points to the opportunities offered by recent diverse archival openings, particularly in Europe, Asia, and Latin America, to go much farther, and in particular to delve far deeper into the secretive communist world. New sources help to discern the interrelationship of the crisis and the concurrent strains in ties between the Soviet and Chinese leaderships as well as the tensions caused by the crisis between Moscow and Havana—what an important new book (on Anastas Mikoyan’s “Mission Impossible” to explain Khrushchev’s decision to remove the missiles to the angry Cubans) calls *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*.⁸

By “Third Wave” I do not mean to inject Toffler into Missile Crisis discourse, but to make the point that the scholarship on the event—or what Soviets knew (and Russians still know) as the Caribbean Crisis, and Cubans refer to as the October Crisis—now seems poised to go global, in multiple respects. For one thing, not only Americans and Russians (and presumably at least some Cubans) blanched at the prospect of a possibly imminent thermonuclear war—the entire world’s attention was seized, gripped by a mixture of terror and fasci-

nation as the drama played out, wondering if, seventeen years after Hiroshima, the Cold War was on the verge of ending with a cataclysm that could kill millions, devastate civilization, and even deliver a lingering doom (via radioactive fallout) to those waiting “On the Beach” in Australia and other locales spared from immediate incineration. How did the rest of the world react, and how was it affected in its subsequent views of the Cold War, nuclear weapons, and other issues?

For students of international affairs, the question boiled down to states: how was the crisis perceived and how did it influence the leaderships of countries around the world—whether in the communist camp, shaken as it was by the widening Sino-Soviet split; the US-led “free world”; or the neutrals, struggling to be a coherent force, barely a year after the Non-aligned Movement was formally created. Even in far-off East Asia, the crisis had a manifest impact—communist sources presented here detail how Khrushchev’s perceived surrender prompted the leaderships in both North Vietnam and North Korea to question the value and credibility of Moscow’s security guarantees, turning them towards accelerated build-ups of their own military capabilities as well as toward the more bellicose Chinese. “The prospect of a hanging concentrates the mind wonderfully,” Dr. Johnson famously said, and historians have recognized that crises deserve special and close attention, for they force leaders and governments to make decisions and articulate positions under pressure, often clarifying or catalyzing or defining previously unclear positions and relationships, and forcing them to the surface. This was true not only for the US government, as exemplified in the wonderfully preserved, secretly-recorded Excomm sessions (which don’t tell us *everything*, as Martin J. Sherwin usefully reminds us), but for the Soviets and other leaderships as well.⁹ “A crisis unfolds in many layers, drawing leaders and their agents in different countries into shifting relationships,” observes Michael H. Hunt, who notes that “only when all the parties involved are combined to achieve a rounded picture” can the difficulties and complexities of the “highly dynamic and interactive process” inherent in a truly international crisis be seriously explored or comprehended.¹⁰

Finally, aside from learning more about countries that were admittedly supporting actors or even bit players in the Cuban drama, moving beyond the traditional sources also helps us to understand the lead actors better. Take Cuba. Since 1992, the Cuban Government and Fidel Castro have personally hosted several useful conferences that, in addition to enabling conversations among US, Russian, and Cuban participations, featured some releases of Cuban records. This *Bulletin* contains a selection of the most interesting Cuban documents that emerged from conferences in Havana to mark the 40th anniversaries of the Bay of Pigs and the Missile Crisis in 2001-2002,

courtesy of the National Security Archive, which co-organized the gatherings. Yet, to date, the Havana authorities have permitted only limited, selective access to state and communist party archives. As a result, the next best thing to discern what was happening in the Cuban leadership and in Cuban foreign policy is the contemporaneous records of those countries with diplomats in Havana able to meet with Cubans, gather gossip, and send back reports from behind the “Sugarcane Curtain.” These include, but are not limited to, those communist countries who maintained inter-party contacts with Cuban comrades, both in Havana and through exchanges of high-level visits, both with the old communist party (the Popular Socialist Party, or PSP) and with Fidel Castro’s 26th of July Movement.” There are dozens of records of talks not only with Fidel Castro but with those in his inner circle, including his brother Raúl (now Cuba’s president), Ernesto “Che” Guevara, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, and others. Want to know what was discussed when Ernesto “Che” Guevara met Mao Zedong? Look inside: although the Cuban records remain sealed, the Chinese archives have yielded extensive records of the conversations when these icons of 20th century revolution first encountered each other in Beijing in November 1960—and other exchanges between Beijing and Havana.

The evidence presented here also contributes valuably to analysis and knowledge regarding the Soviets—including some previously unpublished Russian documents, such as authoritative translations of the Malin Notes of Kremlin discussions (the closest Soviet analogue to the Excomm tapes), important cables from Moscow’s ambassador in Havana relating talks with Fidel Castro, and more. But records from outside Russia, particularly in East-Central Europe in the realm of the late, unlamented Warsaw Pact, also provide insight. A record found in the Prague archives of a conversation between a visiting Czechoslovak communist leader and Nikita Khrushchev in Moscow on 30 October 1962 offers a virtual oral history interview with the Soviet leader only two days after he agreed to withdraw the nuclear missiles from Cuba, when emotions were raw. Cables from Soviet-bloc embassies in Havana in the fall of 1962 (particularly the Czech, Polish, and Hungarian) testify, also, to the intense emotions that were flowing, both during the preparations to fight the “imperialists” during the crisis, and the confusion and bitterness in the aftermath of Khrushchev’s concession.

Finally, the documents even raise new questions and offer new information about the frequently-reconstructed goings-on in Washington—not everything was written down in US documents, and telegrams from Swiss, Dutch, and other ambassadors record some reactions of senior officials and also reveal hidden attempts to communicate between Washington and Fidel Castro’s Havana. In particular, the Brazilian,

Yugoslav, and Chilean documents shed light on the attempt by Rio to mediate a solution to the crisis and a broader amelioration of the US-Cuban confrontation, illuminating some usually hidden dynamics of the crisis both in Latin America and in the neutral or non-aligned world.

In sum, significant Russian (and even American) evidence continues to emerge on the Missile Crisis, illuminating old debates and sparking new ones, but the increasing availability of an astonishing array of formerly inaccessible archival and other sources from around the world enables us to tell new stories and glean fresh insights and information on old ones. I hope you will enjoy exploring this endlessly retold story from the many original and fascinating new perspectives offered by this “Third Wave” of evidence: Surf’s up!

* * * * *

Assembling this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin* (like any!) required labors from many people. At the Wilson Center, I thank Christian F. Ostermann, CWIHP Director and Editor of the *Bulletin*, for allowing me to join him for this issue as Guest Editor, for authorizing some fairly serious expenditures to pay for the translations of many documents from various countries, and for supporting my work in many ways over the years. I also thank those involved in the production of the issue, especially Allison Lyalikov and Laura Deal. My gratitude also goes to the National Security Archive, whose cooperation was essential. Since its creation in 1985, the Archive has organized a vast number of activities, conferences, and publications related to the crisis, and its director, Thomas S. Blanton, in particular, has galvanized this effort and aided my own research in too many ways to name. At the archive I also want to thank in particular Malcolm Byrne (who located electronic copies of many translations obtained for the 2002 conference in Havana); Svetlana Savranskaya (energetic seeker and interpreter—literally and figuratively—of Russian sources for two decades); Peter Kornbluh; and William Burr. I also thank all the colleagues and friends around the globe who helped procure documents and contributed introductions, translations, commentaries, permissions, and advice for this issue, in the process diverting from their crowded schedules and enduring persistent harassment to meet the arbitrary deadline of the 50th anniversary of the Missile Crisis as well as numerous editorial queries. In no particular order (and advance apologies to anyone inadvertently omitted), these include: Timothy Naftali, Guy Laron, Rimko van der Maar; Malgorzata Gnoinska, Hirata Masaki, Csaba Bekes, Jordan Baev, Tanya Harmer, Svetozar Rajak, Leopoldo Nuti, Silvio Pons, David Wolff, Garret Martin, Peer Henrik Hansen, Piero Gleijeses, Phil Brenner, Carlos Alzugaray

Treto, Hans-Herman Hertle, Stephanie Popp, Pierre Asselin, James Person, Alex Barrow, Bastiaan Bouwman, Christopher Dunlap, Adolf Kotlik. Shen Zhihua, Sergey Radchenko, and Qian Zhang deserve particular kudos for translating a stray conversation during a conference at Hong Kong University this past February into the amazing collection of Chinese archival materials published here. A special word of thanks to James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, and Mark Kramer, for their pioneering and continuing efforts over the past quarter-century to obtain evidence, oral history and documentary, on the communist side(s) of the Cuban Missile Crisis. And finally, thanks to my family, especially my wife Annie, for tolerating my latest Cold War obsession over these last few months, including during a nominal family summer vacation.

All of the above contributed in their own manifold ways to fulfilling the slogan of the researchers of one fondly-remembered cold war history project that also had a Cuban angle: *Documentos o muerte! Venceremos!*

Notes

1 Influential early works by former US officials included Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965); Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965); Roger N. Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967); Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1969).

2 Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1971).

3 On the series of conferences, see esp. James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1990); and James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), pp. 474-91.

4 For translated Soviet documents on the Missile Crisis that emerged from Russian archives in the decade after the USSR collapsed in 1991, see esp. the compilations in *CWIHP Bulletin* no. 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 58, 63-77; nos. 8-9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 370-338; and nos. 14-15 (Winter 2003/Spring 2004), pp. 385-98, all available on the CWIHP website.

5 Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *“One Hell of a Gamble”: Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-196* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1997) and Michael Dobbs’ *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008). Allison’s work also received a make-over, with a new edition co-authored by Philip Zelikow, in 1999; Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*:

Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1999).

6 For space reasons and to underline this publication's value to a field still dominated by Americans, I have excluded not only US documents but others that they can read, i.e., those from other English-language archives that are now available, including Australian, British, Canadian, Indian, and United Nations.

7 See, e.g., Maurice Vaisse, ed., *L'Europe et la Crise de Cuba* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1993); Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993); L.V. Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy, and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999);

and James G. Hershberg, "The United States, Brazil, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962," pts. 1 and 2, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6:2 (Spring 2004), pp. 3-20, and 6:3 (Summer 2004), pp. 5-67.

8 Sergo Mikoyan, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, ed. Svetlana Savranskaya (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012)

9 For Sherwin, see his essay in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

10 On the importance of crises, see, e.g., Michael Hunt, *Crises in US Foreign Policy: An International History Reader* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), p. 422.

The Cuban Missile Crisis Just Isn't What It Used to Be

By Thomas Blanton

This special issue of the estimable Cold War International History Project *Bulletin* represents the latest high-water mark of more than 25 years of document-splunking that has radically changed what we thought we knew about this most-studied of all international crises. Indeed, the Cuban Missile Crisis just isn't what it used to be,¹ because historians, political scientists, psychologists, documents fetishists, and eyewitnesses (including even Fidel Castro) have revised and reconstructed all of our received narratives, while adding many new ones we never thought about before. In this issue, we even find extraordinary new details on the global impact of the Cuban Missile Crisis, for example in East Asia, and on the development of what would become today's North Korean nuclear program! In a classic example of what the *Bulletin* does best, this issue features—for the first time in print—Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev describing his motivations for putting the missiles in Cuba, and pulling them out, practically in real time, as he debriefs the Czechoslovak Communist leader Antonin Novotny on 30 October 1962. This spectacular oral history complements such gems in this issue as the thorough translation of the Malin notes from the Soviet Politburo during the crisis—the kind of information that the CIA would have killed for at the time.

Documents like these, excavated from the frequently uncooperative clutches of security establishments and archives around the world, have punctured one after another the myths of the Missile Crisis. The old story revolved around unprovoked aggressive behavior by the Soviets met with tough American brinkmanship. President John F. Kennedy's biographer Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. conveyed the conventional wisdom (and the well-spun press coverage after the Crisis) when he described Kennedy's "brilliantly controlled... matchlessly calibrated" crisis management that forced the Soviets to back down. Secretary of State Dean Rusk provided the most famous quote about the Crisis: "We're eyeball-to-eyeball, and the other fellow just blinked." But the documents over time (and with the benefit of a series of pioneering "critical oral history" conferences that confronted the policymakers with the evidence, and each other) compelled new conclusions and new narratives suggesting, in fact, that both sides blinked, that the Crisis arose from adventurism beforehand by both Kennedy (his harassment of Cuba with assassination plots and Operation Mongoose) and Khrushchev (his deceptive deployment of the missiles); and that both leaders stepped

back from the brink because of their mutual sense of events spinning out of control.²

Indeed, the new evidence suggested the Crisis was even more dangerous than policymakers thought at the time, with multiple potential flashpoints, mostly unbeknownst to the highest officials and certainly out of their control, girdling the globe with nuclear weapons whose routine deployment was standard operating procedure for both U.S. and Soviet militaries. Thus, American fighter jets scrambling over Alaska to defend an off-course U-2 spy plane over Siberia during the most dangerous day of the Crisis (27 October), each carried nuclear-tipped air-to-air missiles under their wings. Soviet diesel submarines, harassed at the quarantine line with signaling depth charges as the crisis neared its climax, each carried a nuclear-tipped torpedo for taking out large surface ships, or even fleets!³ Armageddon was upon us in October 1962; events were in the saddle and riding mankind; adventurism, accident and human fallibility spelled a doom that was only avoided by luck and restraint. Yet humility and contingency rarely featured in the literature of supposed "lessons learned" from the Cuban Missile Crisis, surely the most-cited (and most mis-cited) of historical analogies for subsequent American policymaking, ranging from the "calibrated" escalation of the Vietnam War to the 2003 invasion of Iraq.⁴ Different lessons resonated in locations like Hanoi, as this *Bulletin* points out, where hardliners saw Soviet weakness and decided to raise the military ante in the South.

The CWIHP *Bulletin* to the contrary notwithstanding, American-centricity dominates discussion of the Crisis even now, but first the trickle and then the flood of new documentation since the 1980s has provided multiple correctives to the *Thirteen Days* version, which centered in the Oval Office, bashed Moscow, and ignored Havana altogether. Yet the slow motion crisis in U.S.-Cuba relations that catalyzed events in 1962 continues even today. The primary sources—and not least, two historic conferences hosted by Havana in 1992 and 2002—have restored Fidel Castro to the Crisis equation as an independent variable, at the center of key episodes ranging from the anti-aircraft firing decisions on the most dangerous day, to the protracted endgame of the Crisis that continued well into November.⁵

In fact, the story of the documentary history of the Cuban Missile Crisis deserves a book in and of itself, but this brief introduction is not the place, nor has the space, to do justice to that remarkable progression, which proceeded in

fits and starts over three decades despite enormous barriers to the recovery of history. The primary sources were all too often not primary at all, obscured or concealed by secrecy classification systems, bureaucratic inertia and obfuscation, and not least of all the self-interest of many participants to massage the record. Yet, without this basic research of opening the sources, the next levels of scholarly work are hardly possible, or merely speculative. Indeed, in the absence of rigorous evidence, political science models rushed in where angels feared to tread.⁶

A few “docu-moments” stand out, however, as emblematic of the power of primary sources, and worth citing here. Back in 1986, for example, a psychologist with an historical bent (Jim Blight) then in residence at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government came to the (less than a year old) National Security Archive to ask about new documents on the Missile Crisis. Blight had met former defense secretary Robert McNamara during a project called “avoiding nuclear war,” and McNamara had challenged the notion of crisis management altogether, arguing for the elimination of nuclear weapons and the study of crisis prevention instead.⁷ Blight’s dean, Graham Allison, had challenged the novice researcher to make *Essence of Decision* irrelevant, clearly doubting the possibility.⁸ And other scholars were complaining that the bookshelves were already too full of Missile Crisis volumes—what else was there to learn?⁹

At the Archive, Blight encountered a couple of beer-bottle crates¹⁰ full of newly declassified records obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, including some real eye-openers. Here, for example, were two pages of Top Secret single-spaced notes, taken and signed by McNamara as one of 5 people in the room, detailing the White House military briefing on 21 October, the day before the President’s speech announcing the presence of the missiles in Cuba and the imposition of a quarantine—not an air strike, as so many of his advisers had recommended. The notes show the head of the Air Force Tactical Air Command, General Walter Sweeney, describing the hundreds of sorties that would hit Cuba on the first day, but honestly admitting that he couldn’t guarantee taking out all the missiles: “[H]e was certain the air strike would be ‘successful’; however, even under optimum conditions, it was not likely that all the known missiles would be destroyed.”¹¹ In other words, a single one could well be launched—boom goes Atlanta.¹² By the end, the discussion turned to the President’s brother Bobby (speaking perhaps on behalf of JFK) who said he opposed the air strike for two reasons, the similarity to what the Japanese did at Pearl Harbor, and the “unpredictable” Soviet response that could “lead to general nuclear war.” Needless to say, Jim Blight the psychologist and incipient crisis analyst was riveted, a fly-on-

the-wall in the White House room, connected by the primary source to the very day and hour of decision.

Such documents led Blight to bring together all the Kennedy aides in March 1987, at a congenial resort in the Florida Keys. Face to face with the mounds of declassified documents, and with each other, lips loosened. In one of many highlights, former national security adviser McGeorge Bundy read out a letter written by former Secretary of State Dean Rusk for the occasion, revealing for the first time anywhere an initiative known only to Rusk and President Kennedy, undertaken on the evening of the most dangerous day—just in case direct communication with Khrushchev through the Soviet ambassador failed. Rusk wrote, “It was clear to me that President Kennedy would not let the Jupiters in Turkey become an obstacle to the removal of the missile sites in Cuba because the Jupiters were coming out in any event.” On the night of 27 October, JFK tasked Rusk to reach the Dean of the School of International Affairs at Columbia University, Andrew Cordier, a former top aide to UN Secretary General U Thant, to propose that he be ready to urge Thant to make a public proposal for a trade of the Turkey missiles for the Cuba missiles, as an alternative to war (thereby allowing Kennedy to, as it were, accept his own proposal, laundered through Thant). As it happened, Khrushchev on Sunday morning (Washington time), 28 October, accepted the non-invasion pledge, and the secret withdrawal of the Turkey missiles, so the Cordier ploy was unnecessary—but the revelation (in combination with the transcript of the 27 October Excomm discussions, also disclosed around this time) illuminated JFK the dove, the diplomatic trader doing anything he could to avoid war, backing away from the brink.¹³

The next documentary breakthroughs came in January 1989, just before an American delegation led by McNamara arrived in Moscow to test Jim Blight’s “critical oral history” method with actual Soviet officials, including the former foreign minister Andrei Gromyko and former ambassador to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin. Just then, the National Security Archive’s Freedom of Information work opened the first of the long-secret Operation Mongoose files, detailing the U.S. covert operations against Cuba after the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. The documents upset the conventional wisdom—dating back to the ExComm discussions and forward to books such as Graham Allison’s—by reinforcing Cuban and Soviet claims of U.S. aggression (and threatened potential invasion) as the catalyst for the Soviet missile deployment, and the defense of Cuba as the leading Soviet motivation. At the least, the evidence forced the American delegation to put themselves in Soviet and Cuban shoes. One Mongoose prospectus, written on stationery of the Office of the Secretary of Defense in July 1962, even described a

serious policy option as “Use a provocation and overthrow the Castro-Communist regime by U.S. military force.”¹⁴ McNamara himself was sufficiently sobered by the documents to change his mind about the conventional wisdom: “I want to state quite frankly,” he stated at the January 1989 Moscow conference, “that with hindsight, if I had been a Cuban leader, I think I might have expected a U.S. invasion.”¹⁵ (This statement of empathy, made not only in front of the Soviets but also a Cuban delegation that the Russians had invited – much to the surprise and consternation of the Americans! – played no small role in the subsequent invitation from the Cubans to come to Havana and hear from Fidel himself.)

The other Moscow documentary highlight in 1989 featured the interplay between documents and memory and secondary literature. Former ambassador Dobrynin, citing his own still-secret cables about his meetings with Bobby Kennedy, challenged Theodore Sorensen about Bobby’s famous memoir, *Thirteen Days*, which skated over the details of what Dobrynin said was Bobby’s explicit offer on 27 October to trade the Jupiter missiles in Turkey for the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Publicly of course, the Kennedy administration had denied any such deal; aides had blamed UN ambassador Adlai Stevenson (a Kennedy political rival) for suggesting such a thing; Rusk had cabled ambassadors after the Crisis denying it and McNamara had even done so in testimony to Congress. But under pressure in Moscow, Sorensen admitted he had edited a “very explicit” reference to the secret deal out of RFK’s manuscript, which he had edited, uncredited, after Robert Kennedy’s June 1968 assassination but before its posthumous appearance the following year. Not until 1994 would the Dobrynin cable itself from 27 October reach the public domain, through the Japanese broadcaster NHK. Another year would pass before scholars could read Dobrynin’s follow-up cable, recording his 30 October meeting with RFK, where Bobby handed back to the Soviet envoy a formal letter from Khrushchev mentioning the deal, and explained, “Speaking in all candor, I myself, for example, do not want to risk getting involved in the transmission of this sort of letter, since who knows where and when such letters can surface or be somehow published – not now but in the future – and any changes in the course of events are possible. The appearance of such a document could cause irreparable harm to my political career in the future.”¹⁶

Testimony to the power of the primary source to alter the present and the future as well as what we think of the past came again in Havana in January 1992. Just before the conferees arrived, the Soviet Union had collapsed, and so had U.S. government barriers to the declassification of the previously secret correspondence between Kennedy and Khrushchev during the Crisis – which the organizers hast-

ily compiled into a briefing book for the conference.¹⁷ The conference schedule listed Fidel Castro only for the opening and closing discussions, but instead, the Cuban leader stayed for all four days, because, he said, the Kennedy-Khrushchev letters grabbed him. Apparently, Castro had stayed up all night reading the 85 pages of letters bargaining away his fate, behind his back, “that is why I was a bit sleepy yesterday here in the meeting.”¹⁸

The drama of documents opening then opened other documents. At one of the breaks in Havana 1992, Archive staff presented Castro with more than 10,000 pages of declassified U.S. documents, neatly preserved on microfiche, and with a two-volume index – testimony to the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. Not long afterwards, Castro snapped his fingers and hauled out his own archives, including a long and previously unknown letter from Khrushchev a few months after the crisis, addressed to the young passionate revolutionary, describing snow falling on the birches, inviting the Cuban to visit and make up and go hunting and fishing together.¹⁹ At another point, while introducing the 23 October letter he received from Khrushchev, Castro started to read from it and said, “I’m declassifying here. Does ‘declassification’ have anything to do with the class struggle? [Laughter.]”²⁰

In this context, declassification became an epidemic. The Soviet general perhaps most conversant with the missile deployment planning, Anatoly Gribkov, matter-of-factly included in his Havana conference presentation a discussion of tactical nuclear weapons in the Soviet forces in Cuba. The Americans were stunned. McNamara even interrupted the translator to make sure he heard that correctly – tactical nukes would have meant enormous casualties in a U.S. invasion, and a major escalatory trigger to which the U.S. would have inevitably responded in kind. Massive controversy ensued from Gribkov’s disclosure, including multiple news headlines and journal articles, with scholars of Soviet command-and-control disbelieving. But subsequent releases, some by Gribkov’s initiative and others found in the collection of the late Soviet military historian Gen. Dmitry Volkogonov at the Library of Congress, proved that the Operation Anadyr deployment plans included even more tactical nuclear weapons than Gribkov had described, and that, just like on the U.S. side, tacticals were in all the war plans as standard operating procedure. The danger factor in the Cuban Missile Crisis had just gained an exponent.²¹

After the 1992 conference, the declassification continued. The Cubans became willing, after repeated requests, to give the Americans a copy of the core account on the Cuban side of the Crisis – Castro’s lengthy secret speech to his comrades during a tense moment in Cuban-Soviet relations in early 1968, reviewing the whole history of the Missile Crisis from

the Cuban perspective, including his dark feelings of being sold out by the Soviet Union. At a subsequent gathering, a Cuban official would refer to the secret speech in a dinner toast, lifting a glass of rum “to our next historical inquiry together, to the mystery of whether Cuba has suffered more from American aggression, or Soviet friendship?”²²

Après Havana, le deluge! The CIA hastened to mark the 30th anniversary year and claim credit for its photographic breakthroughs of 1962 with a published volume of declassified documents and a conference under the “bubble”—in the auditorium at Langley, Virginia—even including uncleared Havana conference participants such as Khrushchev’s son Sergei.²³ The State Department took longer, but released far more, with its *Foreign Relations of the United States* volume and microfiche supplement of documents on the Missile Crisis.²⁴ The John F. Kennedy Library finally achieved in late 1996 the declassification of the October 1962 ExComm tapes, 17 hours worth. Multiple published versions of the tape transcripts ensued—particularly from the ambitious project launched by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia—and the new evidence forced scholars to look again at JFK the dove. On 27 October, for example, as the Joint Chiefs are urging the invasion of Cuba, JFK remarks, “We can’t very well invade Cuba, with all its toil and blood there’s gonna be, when we could have gotten ‘em [the missiles in Cuba] out by making a deal on the same missiles in Turkey. If that’s part of the record, but ah... then you don’t have a very good war.”²⁵

Post-Soviet Russia now was losing the documents race, as the brief period of archival openness in the early 1990s (corresponding to the CIA’s) had given way to a pattern of negotiated exclusive-access arrangements. Notably, the academician Aleksandr Fursenko teamed up with the Harvard-trained Canadian scholar Timothy Naftali and a major publisher’s book advance to take advantage of the usually-off-limits Kremlin archive (Archive of the President of the Russian Federation), together with a wide range of other sources (even some materials from the former KGB and GRU archives), to produce a whole new narrative centered in Moscow for a change. Among many other highlights, at the core of the Fursenko/Naftali account were the remarkable short-hand notes taken by Khrushchev aide Vladimir Malin during meetings of the Presidium of the Central Committee—the distilled Soviet equivalent to the ExComm tapes, or as close as we’re likely to get—featured in this *Bulletin* in a new updated translation by Mark Kramer and Naftali. These contemporaneous notes showed Khrushchev abandoning adventurism almost immediately after Kennedy’s 22 October speech, pulling back from the brink, ordering Soviet ships still en route to Cuba to turn around, avoiding confrontation, sending instructions

to his commanders in Cuba against using nuclear weapons without direct orders from Moscow—in effect, going dove much like his counterpart in Washington.²⁶

By the time of the 40th anniversary of the Missile Crisis in 2002, documentary momentum and current events conspired to bring the eyewitnesses back to the table in Havana. Washington was debating the imminent invasion of Iraq, on the ostensible grounds of weapons of mass destruction present there; while pundits and policymakers cited the Crisis for their own ends with phrases like “credible threat of force” and even “blockade.” Robert McNamara was ready to go back to Havana, seeing yet another opportunity for him to deliver his jeremiad on nuclear weapons and crisis prevention. Fidel Castro was ready to receive the visitors, not least because Hollywood had left him out of the Crisis again, with the blockbuster movie *Thirteen Days* featuring Kevin Costner as Kennedy—a movie that Castro viewed with Costner in a private screening in April 2001.²⁷

But this time around the headlines in Havana came from underwater. By October 2002, the Archive’s sleuths in Russia and at the Navy Yard in Washington had matched some extraordinary oral histories and contemporaneous diaries from Soviet submariners, together with the extensive U.S. Navy tracking charts for the four diesel “Foxtrot” submarines deployed from Murmansk to what they expected would be their permanent base in Mariel. (Their families would have followed, for a nice tour in the tropics, so imagine the disappointment when Khrushchev ordered the subs to stall after 22 October and ultimately to return home.) Unbeknownst to the U.S. Navy, busy tracking and harassing and “forcing to the surface” the submarines, each one carried a nuclear-tipped torpedo and orders to use it if a war broke out. On the ExComm tapes one hears Kennedy’s concern at the harassment of the Soviet subs, even without knowing about the torpedoes, and McNamara’s reassurances that only “signaling depth charges” (like grenades) would be used. At the Havana conference table, retired Navy Captain John Peterson (aboard a key destroyer chasing the subs in 1962) explained the sailors’ frustration at dropping such firecrackers, so they encased the grenades in toilet paper tubes and the cardboard would keep the pin from popping and only disintegrate hundreds of meters down, right next to the Soviet subs. Also at the table was former Soviet submariner and signals intelligence officer Vadim Orlov, who described the impact of the “signaling” depth charges as the equivalent of being inside an oil drum getting struck with a sledgehammer. Coming on top of horrendous temperatures (the subs were made for the Arctic, not the Caribbean) and equipment breakdowns (including interruptions in communications with Moscow), the Navy’s pressure—culminating above Orlov’s sub on the most dan-

gerous day of 27 October—nearly put the commander of that submarine over the edge. Thinking the war had already broken out upstairs, the Soviet captain ordered the arming of the nuclear torpedo, and only calmed down under the influence of a peer officer aboard named Vasily Arkhipov. For McNamara especially, and for the reporters present in Havana, this was news—yet another example, previously unknown, of how close we were to Armageddon in October 1962, how fallible we humans are, how illusory the notion of crisis management.²⁸

For the documents fetishists among us, Havana's most joyful moment came when a historian got to play ambassador. The Kennedy ExComm had discussed at length at the height of the Crisis sending a message to Fidel through the well-respected Brazilian ambassador in Havana, Luis Bastian Pinto — a message (camouflaged as Brazilian rather than American) that would warn Castro that his Soviet allies were negotiating behind his back, that the presence of the missiles endangered Cuba, and more. Events intervened on 26 and 27 October; by the 28th Khrushchev had already announced the deal; and the Brazilian message, by the time it was delivered to Castro by an emissary sent from Rio, received little attention, since the Cuban leader did not realize its actual source of inspiration. Only four decades later, at the 2002 Havana conference, did a scholar inform him that in fact the message had been scripted in Washington, not Rio, and approved personally by JFK and the Excomm. Though Castro told the professor he would still have scoffed at the proposal, regardless of its source, the discovery of the hidden Brazilian effort (which in fact climaxed a nearly three-year attempt to mediate between Washington and Havana) helped inspire this special issue and its focus on the global history of the Missile Crisis.²⁹

Substantively, the most significant new evidence on the Missile Crisis actually extends it well beyond the conventional thirteen days. At the 2002 Havana conference, and in the text of his posthumous book in 2012, Sergo Mikoyan detailed the Soviets' initial plan to leave the tactical nuclear weapons in Cuba and even train the Cubans to use them—Cuba as a nuclear power! Drawing on the extraordinary series of transcripts of his father's meetings with the Cuban leadership in November 1962, plus the cables back and forth with Moscow, Mikoyan the historian explained how Mikoyan the deputy premier at first empathized with Castro's sense of betrayal, but gradually came to see the volatile Cuban leadership as undependable. In effect, Cuban intransigence (their righteous indignation at the Soviet pullout without consultation, and unilateral actions like Castro saying on 16 November the Cubans will shoot at the low-flying U.S. planes) convinced the Soviets that it was too risky to leave behind any nuclear weapons in Cuba. In the culminating 22 November con-

versation with Castro, the Soviet emissary even conjured up a (nonexistent) Soviet law that purportedly prohibited the transfer of such weapons beyond Soviet control—and then cabled his colleagues in Moscow practically urging them to hastily devise such a law. But thus the Missile Crisis was finally settled.³⁰

Now, 50 years after the fact, we are approaching a multi-national, multi-archival, multi-lingual history of the Missile Crisis, even as we are getting further and further away from the immediacy, the sense of crisis, the “lived forward” and “understood backward” reality. The most important—and continuing—barrier to historical understanding of the Missile Crisis arises from excessive and anachronistic secrecy, mostly-outdated national security classification on all sides of the former Cold War. Decades after the fact, U.S. securocrats still censor references to the Jupiter missiles in Turkey and Italy, even though, as a contemporaneous document pointed out in 1961, the presence of the Jupiters was no secret, evident to anyone driving by on the highway: “It clearly makes no sense to classify the existence of the Jupiters and their location, but the Italian Government seems to want it that way, for political reasons.”³¹ Indeed, for political reasons, such historical nuclear deployments remain secret today by the order of the Republican-dominated U.S. Congress in 1998, which decreed in the Kyl-Lott amendments the re-review of documents declassified in the post-Cold War Clinton-era reforms just in case they referred to nuclear weapons—in effect the last gasp of a discredited Republican conspiracy theory that President Clinton had divulged nuclear secrets to the Chinese.³²

The intelligence bureaucrats have been just as retrograde as the nuclear ones, only now, 50 years later, beginning to declassify President Kennedy's intelligence briefings, the President's Intelligence Checklist (the so-called “pickle”). Reviewers of intelligence records have left whole sections of the Kennedy tapes deleted as somehow sensitive, even though written records and notes of the same conversations—including the deleted sections—have been declassified for years. For example, in the 26 October briefing of Kennedy on the latest photographs over Cuba, the tapes are missing the section where CIA director McCone points to a shot of a LUNA/FROG tactical missile launcher and suggests the possibility of “tactical nuclear weapons for fighting troops in the field.” This of course had been known publicly at least since General Gribkov announced the deployment at the 1992 Havana conference, and the JFK Library's own descriptive notes on the meeting include the direct McCone remark quoted here.³³

Of course, researcher frustrations with Washington's archival bottlenecks pale beside those encountered in Moscow. Huge swathes of the Soviet archives—those of the KGB,

military intelligence (GRU), and the General Staff, for example—remain almost completely off-limits to researchers in the newly authoritarian Russia. Similarly, continuing official hostility between Cuba and the U.S. offers an excuse, or pretext, for authorities on both sides of the Florida Straits to keep all too many of the relevant files locked away in the vaults. Were it not for the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989, many of the contents of this special issue of the *CWHP Bulletin* would likewise remain concealed under ideological control.

Over and above the security blockades are the actual assaults on the record. Fidel Castro has described a Malecon flood that inundated the Cuban foreign ministry archives, stashed in a basement. More pernicious have been the actual alteration and even destruction of the historical record by participants. The most egregious offenders here were the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, who ordered in 1974 (after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that President Nixon could not keep his Watergate tapes to himself) the destruction of their entire taped proceedings dating back to the 1950s, leaving only 31 pages of notes dating from the Missile Crisis period.³⁴ On a lesser scale, but still emblematic, was the penciled scratch-through—possibly by Bobby Kennedy himself—altering his 30 October memo addressed to Secretary of State Rusk (but later found only in a Presidential file) to delete mention of the specific Turkey-for-Cuba missile trade he had discussed with Dobrynin.³⁵

Persisting control of key records by interested parties, including the memoirists with exclusive access to files, has certainly enabled self-serving official spin over the years. For example, the RFK family continues to claim ownership of the Attorney General's office files as if they were personal records, even though the security classification of most of the 62 boxes would preclude the family from even looking at the files they supposedly own.³⁶ But the documentary history of the Cuban Missile Crisis also features notable exceptions such as in the generosity of scholar/eyewitness Sergo Mikoyan. Archives of the world will unite—they have nothing to lose but their chains!

Even the documents fetishists must also give credit to the memoirists like Sorensen and Schlesinger who gave us road-maps to the documents, and went on to participate enthusiastically in the whole series of “critical oral history” conferences, helping to supply the atmospherics and context sometimes missing from the documents—and even specific exchanges that the documents did not capture verbatim, but which lodge themselves in memory. Such is Sorensen's account of Dean Acheson's advocacy for an immediate and massive air strike on the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Acheson was asked, what would the Soviets do in response? “I think I know the

Soviet Union well. I know what they are required to do in the light of their history and their posture around the world. I think they will knock out our missiles in Turkey.” Then what should we do? “Well, I believe under our NATO treaty with which I was associated, we would be required to respond by knocking out a missile base inside the Soviet Union.” Then what do they do? “Well, then that's when we hope cooler heads will prevail, and, they'll stop and talk.”³⁷

Notes

1 The title owes its inspiration to the late C. Vann Woodward, “Our Past Isn't What It Used to Be,” *The New York Times Book Review*, 28 July 1963.

2 For an earlier overview, see Thomas Blanton, “Annals of Blinksmanship,” *The Wilson Quarterly*, Summer 1997. For myth-by-myth puncturing, see the series of Web postings by Michael Dobbs including *The “Eyeball-to-Eyeball” Myth*, posted 2 July 2008, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/dobbs/, and for the most current standard account, Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Knopf, 2008).

3 See Michael Dobbs, *Missing Over the Soviet Union*, posted 11 June 2008, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/dobbs/maultsby.htm.

4 For the latest account, in “transmedia” format, by the pioneers of “critical oral history,” see James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, *The Armageddon Letters: Kennedy/Khrushchev/Castro in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012).

5 See James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, The Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon, 1993). For the best account of the post-October crisis, with an extraordinary selection of previously unavailable transcripts of Cuban-Soviet discussions, see Sergo Mikoyan, edited by Svetlana Savranskaya, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis: Castro, Mikoyan, Kennedy, Khrushchev and the Missiles of November* (Stanford, CA/Washington, DC: Stanford University Press/Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012).

6 The best-selling and most influential academic book on the Crisis, Graham Allison's *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971), relies on models of decision-making (rational actor, organizational process, and bureaucratic politics) to tell the story, although the cascade of new evidence has rendered most of those explanations as obsolete as the Jupiters (that is to say, still powerful, but not at all what you'd want to deploy anywhere). For the most comprehensive review of Allison, as well as of his second edition of *Essence*, co-authored in 1999 with Philip Zelikow, see Barton J. Bernstein, “Understanding Decisionmaking, U.S. Foreign Policy, and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), pp. 134-164.

7 Blight and Lang, *The Armageddon Letters*, Appendix A.

8 James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1989), p. viii.

9 See Eliot A. Cohen, "Why We Should Stop Studying the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The National Interest* (Winter 1986), pp. 3-13. Cohen now serves as a senior foreign policy adviser for Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

10 There remains some debate among eyewitnesses as to whether the beer boxes were Pabst Blue Ribbon or Schaefer, but either low-end brand would have been a favorite of the Archive's upstart softball team, the Info Czars.

11 Robert McNamara, "Notes on October 21, 1962 Meeting with the President," Document 26 in Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, *The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: The New Press, 1992; revised edition, 1998), pp. 154-155. This volume, together with the 40th anniversary Web postings at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/docs.htm, provide a selection of "greatest hits" from the massive indexed reference collections on the Crisis produced by the Archive in 1990 (edited by Chang) and 2006 (edited by Kornbluh) totaling some 5,000 documents, all available through the Digital National Security Archive published by ProQuest, <http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/home.do>.

12 A reference to "boom goes London and boom Pa-ree, more room for you and more room for me," in Randy Newman's classic song, "Political Science" (1972).

13 Blight and Welch, *On the Brink*, pp. 83-84. But see Philip Zelikow and Ernest May, eds., *The Presidential Recordings: John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises, Volume Three* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2001), p. 485, for doubts about the Cordier contingency.

14 Brig. Gen. Edward Lansdale, "Review of OPERATION MONGOOSE," 25 July 1962, Document 7 in Chang and Kornbluh, *The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962*, pp. 40-47.

15 Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A. Welch, eds., *Back to the Brink* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992), p. 7. For the best review of pre-Crisis invasion evidence, see James G. Hershberg, "Before 'The Missiles of October': Did Kennedy Plan a Military Strike Against Cuba?" in James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 237-280.

16 For the most comprehensive account, including the Dobrynin cables, the *Thirteen Days* text, and commentary from Sorensen and others, see Jim Hershberg, "Anatomy of a Controversy," *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 75-80; and Jim Hershberg, "More on Bobby and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *CWIHP Bulletin* 8-9 (Winter 1996-1997), pp. 274, 344-347. The RFK quote is on p. 345.

17 Credit goes to Professor Philip Brenner of American University, long-time National Security Archive board member, and Archive founding director Scott Armstrong, who insisted on a Freedom of Information lawsuit to break loose these and several thousand other documents – with the *pro bono* help of the Washington law firm of Crowell & Moring.

18 Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba on the Brink*, p. 219.

19 See Khrushchev to Castro, 31 January 1963, Document 84 in Chang and Kornbluh, *The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962*, pp. 332-342.

20 Blight, Allyn, and Welch, *Cuba on the Brink*, p. 211.

21 Blight, Allyn and Welch, *Cuba on the Brink*, pp. 54-75, includes Gribkov's original presentation and the American reaction. For the best substantive overview of the issue, correcting previous accounts, see Raymond L. Garthoff, "New Evidence on the Cuban Missile Crisis: Khrushchev, Nuclear Weapons, and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *CWIHP Bulletin* 11 (Winter 1998), pp. 251-262. For dramatic evidence of the tactical nuclear weapons ultimately targeting Guantanamo in the event of a U.S. invasion, see Michael Dobbs, "The Soviet Plan to Destroy Guantanamo Naval Base," posted 4 June 2008, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/dobbs/gitmo.htm.

22 For Castro's secret speech and the overall role of Cuba, the indispensable volume is James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers After the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002). For the dinner toast, see *The Washington Post* "Live Online" discussion, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: 40 Years Later," with the author, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/liveonline/02/special/world/sp_world_blanton101602.htm.

23 Mary S. McCauliffe, ed., *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962* (Washington D.C.: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 1992). For the conference, the author was present.

24 The State Department's *FRUS* volume on the Cuban Missile Crisis, published in 1996, is online at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXI/index.html.

25 Sheldon M. Stern, *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 367. Stern's is the best one-volume version of the tapes, providing narrative and evidence from other documents in addition to the direct quotes.

26 Alexandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997). For the Russian text of the Malin notes, see *Presidium TsK KPSS, 1954-1964* (Presidium of the CC CPSU), ed. Alexander Fursenko (Moscow: ROSSPAN, 2003).

27 McNamara discussions with the author in Washington and in Havana during 2002; author's observations of Castro at the Kevin Costner screening in Havana, 9 April 2001, which produced even more documents: Thomas Blanton, "What If the Cuban Missiles Hadn't Been a Secret?" *Slate*, 19 April 2001, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/chatterbox/2001/04/what_if_the_cuban_missiles_hadnt_been_a_secret.html.

28 See William Burr and Thomas Blanton, "The Submarines of October: U.S. and Soviet Naval Encounters During the Cuban Missile Crisis," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book 75, posted 31 October 2002, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB75/>; and Svetlana Savranskaya, "New Sources on the Role of Soviet Submarines in the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Journal of Strategic Studies* Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2005), pp. 233-259. One

of the latest TV documentaries on the Crisis, premiering on PBS on 23 October 2012, focuses on the Arkhipov story as “The Man Who Saved the World.”

29 See James G. Hershberg, “The United States, Brazil, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962, (Parts 1 & 2),” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, No. 2 (Spring 2004), pp. 3-20, and No. 3 (Summer 2004), pp. 5-67.

30 Sergo Mikoyan, ed. Svetlana Savranskaya, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*.

31 “Report on Visit to Jupiter Sites in Italy,” 18 September 1961, by Allen James, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of European Affairs, SECRET (original in DoS Lot 65D478, National Archives, posted on the National Security Archive web site at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/NC/nh3_4.gif). For dozens of similar examples, see William Burr, “More Dubious Secrets,” <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb281/index.htm>.

32 See “DOE Puts Declassification into Reverse,” by George Lardner Jr., *The Washington Post*, 19 May 2001, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/news/2001/05/wp051901.html>; and Matthew M. Aid, “Declassification in Reverse,” National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book 179, posted 21 February 2006, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB179/>

33 For this 38-second deletion, see Zelikow and Ernest, eds., *The Presidential Recordings: John F. Kennedy: The Great Crises, Volume 3*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2001), p. 327. For the contrast, see Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight*, p. 145 and note on p. 381.

34 See, on this episode, CWIHP *Bulletin* 8-9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 276-77 fn 11. The text of the notes indicates they were handwritten in 1976 and typed in 1993. For the evocative notes, suggesting extraordinary detail and emotion that would have been heard on the tapes, see http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/621000%20Notes%20Taken%20from%20Transcripts.pdf.

35 See Jim Hershberg, “More on Bobby and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” CWIHP *Bulletin* 8-9 (Winter 1996-1997), pp. 345-347. Zelikow and May prefer RFK’s memo, written after the resolution of the crisis and in the midst of the credit-claiming, over Dobrynin’s, written immediately after the meeting. See *The Great Crises Volume Three*, pp. 486-488.

36 See Bryan Bender, “Kennedys Keep Vise-Grip on RFK Papers,” *The Boston Globe*, 5 August 2012, http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2012/08/05/index_details_contents_of_robert_f_kennedys_papers/. [Ed. note: On 11 October 2012, after this introduction was written, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library opened up seven boxes totaling 2,700 pages of these previously closed RFK records, including documents on the missile crisis. JFKL press release, 11 October 2012. For an early assessment, see National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book (EBB) no. 395, “Cuban Missile Crisis Revelations: Kennedy’s Secret Approach to Castro,” edited by Peter Kornbluh, posted 12 October 2012.]

37 Quoted in Douglas Brinkley, *Dean Acheson: The Cold War Years, 1953-1971* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 161-162.

Back to the Archives: The Cuban Missile Crisis At 50

By Martin J. Sherwin

It is always surprising, even to historians, when after fifty years of research and writing important events continue to be misunderstood. The Cuban Missile Crisis may be one of the most thoroughly studied incidents of the twentieth century but, as the documents in this volume make abundantly clear, there are numerous untapped archives around the world ready to offer up new insights and interpretations of this seminal *global* event.

In the United States the study of the Crisis has been EXCOMM-centric, the consequence of both the Kennedy administration's promotion of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council's role in the Crisis, and the later discovery that the president had recorded many of its meetings. But following the Crisis from the perspective of the Excomm, like a "fly on the wall," has led to a distortion: an evasion of the Crisis' historical context.

The Excomm's mostly hawkish advice was problematic. Had it not existed, Kennedy would still have blockaded rather than invaded Cuba. Most of the clear-headed advice he received was offered outside of its meetings by Adlai Stevenson, Dean Rusk, and George Ball, among others. Within 48 hours of being informed that the Soviets had secretly placed medium and intermediate range missiles into Cuba, the president had determined that an invasion entailed risks he was not willing to take; it became Attorney General Robert Kennedy's responsibility to convince the more aggressive EXCOMM members to support the blockade. There remains much to learn about the president's decision-making process.

The Crisis was a global-war-in-the-making, as a summary of the conversation on October 22nd, between former Secretary of State Dean Acheson and French President Charles De Gaulle suggests. "It is more likely that the Russians will try to force the United States to fire the first shot," the minutes of the meeting record in a summary of Acheson's presentation, "which would allow them to respond elsewhere: Berlin? Quemoy? South-East Asia? Korea? Or maybe all these locations at the same time."

"Moreover," the American continued, "the Russians will not fail to launch a massive propaganda campaign, especially towards the neutral countries – Africans or Asians – in order to push their public opinions to call on their governments to pressure the United States."

But somehow, the most devastating event in world history didn't happen, and how a war was prevented remains an

enduring question. Was it the good sense of the principals—Kennedy and Khrushchev—that prevented a holocaust? Or, was it the intense international pressure exerted both privately and publicly that led them to compromise?

The global reach of the Crisis further exposed the multiple poles of the allegedly bi-polar world. It was the Caribbean Crisis to the Soviets, and the October Crisis to the Cubans. But it was also a Sino-Soviet Crisis, a Sino-Indian Crisis, a Berlin Crisis, a NATO crisis, and a crisis in which the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations played a far greater role in the resolution of the Crisis than either the United States or Soviet governments were willing to acknowledge.

The U.N. forced the Crisis onto a world stage that made a participant of every nation that had a U.N. Ambassador, particularly if it was represented on the Security Council. It legitimized and encouraged the efforts of governments, such as Brazil, to promote independent peace plans. A telegram from the Yugoslav Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to its Foreign Ministry, 24 October 1962, makes this point: "There is a general feeling in Brazil that the military blockade of Cuba, for the first time in the history of the Cold War, has brought the USA and the USSR to the very verge of the war because of one L[atin] A[merican] country, making in that way LA and Brazil the center of the Cold War. The feeling of immediate danger mobilized all circles in order to find the way out. They concluded [that the] values of their former independent policy, especially towards Cuba, enables them to influence more freely and with more authority on seeking peaceful solutions."

It involved not only Brazil, but all the Latin and Central American members of the Organization of American States. The energetic effort by the United States to gain OAS support for the blockade gave the nations of South America a sense that they were being taken seriously by a North American administration, perhaps for the first time. Cuba, of course, was a major player in the crisis, although no U.S. policy maker was willing at the time to believe that it had an independent role.

Reports of a Japanese diplomat in Moscow suggest that ordinary Soviet citizens reacted much like Americans after learning that the crisis had broken out.. Mothers with clear wartime memories, he reported on October 24, had rushed to nearby stores to buy large amounts of salt which quickly disappeared from shelves. There were also Soviet skeptics. "It's hard to understand why we had to build a military base

in Cuba in the first place,” a reporter confidentially told his interlocutor. “Kennedy looks gentle and timid. However once he gets furious, he bites you hard and never leaves you even if he loses all his teeth like an Irish bulldog.”

The Castro brothers’ rage at Khrushchev for agreeing to remove the missiles without prior consultation with Havana is reflected in another Japanese diplomatic report. “At a dinner party on [November] 18th hosted by [Anastas] Mikoyan, the Castro brothers didn’t show up.” He then went on to speculate that “Castro might need the possibility of the US invasion because he wants to crack down on anti-government movements by stirring an excessive crisis mentality among the nation. That’s why he cannot accept the base inspection offer.”

The role that nuclear weapons had played in the first seventeen years of the Cold War was transformed by the Crisis. During those “careless years,” both the U.S. and Soviet governments had deployed its existential threat heedlessly

to presumed advantage. The Eisenhower administration’s Massive Retaliation policy and Khrushchev’s nuclear threats during the Suez Crisis are relevant examples. But the frightening realization that nuclear war could be only a stumble away, introduced a more cautious approach to nuclear diplomacy. It led to a re-evaluation of limited nuclear war. The Crisis made it clear that it was too easy to slip into a global war while climbing the rungs of an escalation ladder. That realization led Khrushchev to finally accept the existence of a separate West Berlin, with a Western military presence there.

Technology was another important feature of the Crisis. Not just nuclear weapons, but the vast array of related technologies that in many ways shaped the history of U.S.-USSR relations: ballistic missiles, surface to air anti-aircraft missiles, and the U-2. They were the basic components of the Crisis that took the lead in both its creation and resolution. Technology made things possible, and because they were possible, they were attempted; it was a metaphor for modernity.

Sino-Cuban Relations and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1960-62: New Chinese Evidence

Documents provided by Shen Zhihua and Sergey Radchenko, translated by Zhang Qian, and introduced by James G. Hershberg and Sergey Radchenko

The Cuban Missile Crisis not only marked perhaps the tensest juncture during the Cold War in the East-West conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, but also occurred at a moment of acute strains within the communist world. It happened as the Sino-Soviet split was widening, and Cuba was carefully maneuvering to try to retain the support of both major communist powers. Yet, until now, Sino-Cuban relations during this period have received relatively scant scholarly attention—in part due to the many obstacles impeding access to pertinent Chinese or Cuban sources, and also because the general impression has matched the conclusion of the only serious assessment of relations between Havana and Beijing during this period using Chinese-language sources, which in 2007 concluded flatly that, “By all indications, the Chinese were simply forgotten by the Cubans during the crisis.”¹

Since then, however, the opening of materials from the foreign ministry archives of the People’s Republic of China in Beijing permits far greater inside access to the workings of the Sino-Cuban relationship during the early 1960s, and the translated documents presented here constitute the first major revelations from this until now untapped source. Concentrating on the period 1960-62, they reveal not only a fascinating story of a budding relationship in the secretive communist world—of two leaderships on different sides of the globe, each led by charismatic and iconic figures who had seized power through successful revolutions, assessing each other and the prospects for collaborating to promote a shared cause—but specifically add a new, previously absent perspective on the international history of the Cuban Missile Crisis.



The Cuban Revolution astonished, fascinated, and inspired. The Communist world was reeling from the pains of the 1950s, when Soviet brutality in Eastern Europe, revelations of Stalin’s crimes, crises in Poland and Hungary, and confusion in the Western communist parties dampened revolutionary enthusiasm worldwide. At the same time, after Stalin’s death in 1953, the Kremlin began to downplay the prospects of war and revolution, adopting a more “peaceful” foreign policy. “Peaceful transition,” “peaceful competition,” and “peaceful co-existence” became the new Soviet imperatives in a nuclear age. This did not mean that Stalin’s suc-

cessor, Nikita Khrushchev, had completely abandoned revolutionary foreign policy, but he eyed closer targets—India, Egypt, even Indonesia—and he never dreamed of sponsoring communist revolutions among these prospective Third World allies. As for Latin America, it was so far from the Communist world, and was apparently lodged so firmly in Washington’s hands, that the Soviets were not even looking that way when Castro and his bearded commandos ousted Batista.

The Cuban Revolution, by one account, made the aging Soviet leadership “feel like boys.”² But Nikita Khrushchev was not the only Communist prophet to claim the revolution as his own. Mao Zedong, too, was full of enthusiasm for what Castro was able to accomplish. Since at least 1956, Mao had harbored private misgivings about the direction of Soviet foreign policy. He was not happy about its emphasis on peaceful coexistence with imperialism. The Chairman wanted a more assertive policy, summed up in his famous phrase, uttered at the November 1957 Communist meeting in Moscow in the wake of the Soviet triumph of Sputnik: “The East Wind is prevailing over the West Wind.” The Cuban Revolution seemed to prove Mao’s point. In October 1959 he sharply quarreled with Khrushchev who was just then advocating the “Spirit of Camp David” and talked up the prospects of a détente with the United States. To Mao, Khrushchev’s efforts to ingratiate himself with Eisenhower appeared cowardly and pathetic, just as Castro’s feat showed what true revolutionaries can and should achieve. From the beginning of China’s relationship with Castro’s Cuba, Mao engaged in implicit, and then explicit, competition with the Soviet leaders to win over Cuba, and to interpret the legacy and significance of its revolution.

Although the Cuban Communists had previously turned up in China (Blas Roca was there for the 8th Chinese Communist Party [CCP] Congress in 1956), Mao was not paying special attention to Cuba, and its un-influential Popular Socialist Party (PSP) at the time. Mao’s meeting with Roca on 28 April 1960 was the first major discussion he had had with a Cuban Communist delegation. The Chairman pointed to the Cuban Revolution’s “global significance” because it proved Mao’s point about the basic weakness of American imperialism. “The Americans fear you,” Mao said. “They bully the weak and fear the strong.” Roca replied: “At least hate us, if not fear.” But no, to Mao, fear was the key point. He had long pondered the issue, dismissing the US famously as a “paper tiger.” It had not been two years since Mao ordered the bombardment of outlying Taiwan-held

islands, Jinmen (Quemay) and Mazu (Matsu). At the time the Chairman congratulated himself on scaring the Americans and successfully “sticking a needle up Khrushchev’s ass.”³ Now, the Cubans were carrying Mao’s revolutionary banner forward. “Being next to a huge tiger without paying the slightest attention to it, you just break down superstitions. There is a Chinese idiom, ‘see no people in one’s eyes.’ In your eyes, there is no American imperialism, no tiger. To you, the US could do nothing.” Here was another needle up Khrushchev’s ass.

Mao returned to this point in his conversation with Ernesto “Che” Guevara on 19 November 1960. This was the first encounter of these two great revolutionary icons. Having already contacted Chinese diplomats in third countries to urge the establishment of cordial relations,⁴ “Che” had come to China at the head of an “economic” delegation, to discuss trade and aid, a few months after Castro, in his 2 September 1960 “Declaration of Havana,” formally recognized the PRC (breaking relations with the “puppet” regime on Taiwan) and signaled Cuba’s readiness to accept Chinese economic and military help.⁵ These youngsters clad in military fatigues (Che, thirty-two years old, was among the oldest!) made for a curious contrast with Mao who took his rebel army on the Long March before some of his Cuban guests learned how to walk. This was not a problem for Mao, because the Cubans were “vigorous” and enthusiastic. “Enthusiasm is the first must-have,” Mao explained. “It just cannot be done without enthusiasm.” Mao, who had just witnessed disastrous results of his “Great Leap Forward,” spoke about Cuba but he indirectly criticized his own comrades-in-leadership for lacking the revolutionary enthusiasm to build communism. In a few years Mao would try to whip up this enthusiasm by unleashing the wrath of the “Red Guards” on the party establishment during the Cultural Revolution.

Although inexperienced, the Cubans were true revolutionaries—“internationalist” and “firm.” “Be firm to the end,” Mao taught Che, “this is the hope [of the revolution], and imperialism will find itself in greater difficulty. But waver and compromise, and imperialism will find it easier [to deal with you].” This lesson was not lost on the revolutionary romantic. Che was already leaning to Mao’s side in ideological matters, admiring Mao’s radicalism and his enthusiasm for the revolutionary struggle; there was a true meeting of minds between the two. Several years later we would see them fighting their revolutionary wars: Che—in Africa and later in Latin America, where he died a martyr in 1967 at the hands of the Bolivian government forces; Mao—in his own country, against his own people, amid the chaos of the so-called “Cultural Revolution.”

Mao saw similarities between the Chinese and Cuban revolutions. In fact, he could relate to Castro much better than the Soviet leadership could. Khrushchev, as a young man, marginally participated in the Russian Civil War but he was basically of the post-revolutionary generation. Khrushchev’s trouble-shooter and close confidant Anastas Mikoyan had more revolutionary accomplishments on his CV but none that matched Mao’s years of guerilla struggle against the Guomindang, an experience that spoke to Castro’s own. In his many meetings with the Cubans the Chairman keenly emphasized these similarities. Batista, in his interpretation, was another version of Jiang Jieshi; both had used the same methods against the revolutionaries, and both were ultimately defeated by the same methods. Che acknowledged that there were “almost identical” aspects in the Chinese and the Cuban revolutions, especially in the methods employed, respectively, by Jiang Jieshi and Batista to “encircle” and “suppress” the revolutionary forces. Mao agreed, offering an anatomical observation on the nature of the revolutionary struggle: “When alien entities enter the body, white cells will encircle and suppress them. Jiang Jieshi treated us as bacteria and wanted to destroy us.”

For Mao, such similarities were immensely important, for they suggested the applicability of the Chinese revolutionary experience to other Third World countries. Cuba, though significant, was, after all, a small fish. There were bigger gains to be had in Latin America and elsewhere in the world. Unlike Stalin who, though also global in thinking, tended not to care about far-flung corners of the world where the Soviet Union had no direct security interests, Mao paid great attention to what was happening on the other side of the globe.⁶ He quizzed his guests relentlessly about the prospects for a revolution in just about every Latin American country, even tiny ones like the Dominican Republic or Haiti, though he was especially interested in what would happen in Brazil, the greatest potential gain in that part of the world. In his conversation with the Cuban President Oswaldo Dorticos on 28 September 1961 Mao turned to Brazil right away, recounting to Dorticos the recent visit of the Brazilian Vice-President (by now, President) João Goulart, a leftist who would be ousted in a military coup three years later. This future was yet unknown to Mao, and he had all the reasons to be optimistic that Brazil would one day follow Cuba. “The situation favors you,” he told Dorticos. “Brazil is such a big country, and then there is Mexico.”

Mao was not the only one excited and worried about Brazil’s future. The Soviets likewise eyed the country with great interest, and the Americans with commensurate fears. John Kennedy’s nightmare, that Brazil would soon turn communist and become a “second Cuba,” was Khrushchev’s dream—and also Fidel Castro’s. “In a few years,” the Cuban leader told the newly appointed Chinese Ambassador Shen

Jian on 11 February 1961, "Latin America will have big changes, and things that occurred in China will also take place here."

For Mao, though, exciting as this was, the coming Latin American revolutions were but a part of the much bigger developments that would engulf the entire world in a powerful anti-imperialist storm. He repeatedly drew parallels between Cuba (and Latin America) and different African and Asian countries that, in the Chairman's view, were also ripe for a revolution. In their conversations with the Cubans, Mao and Prime Minister Zhou Enlai made fascinating comparisons between seemingly random places like the Dominican Republic and South Vietnam, or Peru, South Africa and Tibet. Indeed, through these conversations one can trace the evolution of Mao's thinking on the Third World, and the emergence of the narrative of the "Afro-Asian solidarity" that persisted through the mid-1960s. This thinking was premised on the assumption that China's revolution was welcomed in most quarters of the world, and that the different African, Asian, and Latin American countries would follow Mao's leadership and China's example. "I have made a calculation," the Chairman told Dorticos. "The imperialists and the revisionists [e.g., the Soviets] combined, people who oppose us, account for less than one tenth of the global population [which means] nine tenths of the global population support China." Cuba, as both a Third World country and a member of socialist camp, was seen as one of the key allies that would support Mao's bid for leadership in the Communist world, as well as the Third World.

Documents in this collection show that the Chinese government was willing to be generous to their friends from afar. Already in April 1960 Mao offered the Cubans weapons: "We would give as much as you want. It's all right with us whether you would pay for them or not." When Che made his maiden visit to China half a year later, he asked Beijing to purchase sugar from Cuba. Taking the right tack with his hosts, Che cited the amount the Soviets had agreed to buy (2.7 million tons). Prime Minister Zhou Enlai agreed to nearly double China's share to 1 million tons, even though, by his own admission, "the Chinese people are not used to consuming much sugar." "Habits could be changed," Zhou added, smiling. After all, who could refuse an extra spoonful of sugar for the sake of the Cuban revolution? As China had no foreign currency to pay for the imports, Zhou volunteered to barter sugar for China's produce, including for up to 200 thousand tons of rice. "We could help you just by each person having one less bite of rice," the Premier told Che at the time of the most deadly famine in China's history which would cost tens of millions of lives. This was because "the Chinese people

have a duty to support you." Seeing such generosity Che declared his "mission" complete.



Despite an auspicious beginning in 1960-61, Cuba and China did not see eye to eye. Indeed, by 1962 Sino-Cuban relations were in something of a state of flux. On the surface they were very good, with ongoing cultural exchanges, trade, cordial diplomatic conversations, and protestations of revolutionary and ideological solidarity—but behind that was a looming uncertainty and tension brought about by the increasing schism between the two major communist powers. As observers noted at the time and the only serious scholarly study using Chinese-language sources agrees, Fidel Castro resolutely tried to maintain outward neutrality in the emerging Sino-Soviet split, especially given Cuba's obvious economic dependency on economic aid from the Soviet Union. Yet it was also clear that on at least some ideological matters, especially the desirability and even necessity of pursuing armed struggle to promote revolution in Latin America and elsewhere in the Third World, some in the leadership, notably Che Guevara, found the bellicose China line more appealing than what some saw as Moscow's more cautious, plodding strategy emphasizing "peaceful coexistence" with the West. Fidel Castro's own preferences, such as they were, remained a carefully-guarded secret that was the source of considerable speculation that he may have been torn between ideological and emotional affinities for Beijing's approach, and pragmatic recognition of the centrality of Soviet political, economic, and military aid which the Chinese could not match.

He was certainly deeply concerned. In early January 1962, a visiting communist diplomat reported that the Cuban leader, unprompted, had suddenly asked whether negotiations were being planned to reduce or eliminate Sino-Soviet differences, which were damaging the revolutionary cause, adding, "I hope so." Mulling over the disconcerting rift, the Hungarian deputy foreign minister reported, "Fidel Castro returned again to analyzing the extremely harmful consequences that may follow from breaking up unity in the socialist camp, and the analysis of the international, especially the Latin American situation led him to conclude that this was the worst time possible for a debate like this and especially the worst time for the deepening of the antagonism between the Soviet and the Chinese parties."⁷

The Hungarian also reported complaints from Moscow's ambassador that China's embassy in Havana was consistently generating "anti-Soviet propaganda" and quoted senior Cuban communist Carlos Rafael Rodríguez as saying, with some resignation, that despite the government's best efforts

to muffle the growing Sino-Soviet antagonism he “was afraid that it would not be possible to prevent this debate from becoming public until the end of time, which will raise serious problems.”⁸

A few months later, in late March 1962, Castro only deepened the mystery of Cuba’s position in the communist realm by overseeing a purge of the pro-Moscow Popular Socialist Party (PSP) and its leader, Aníbal Escalante, in a clear hint of displeasure with the Kremlin (which was soon forced to replace its ambassador in Havana as part of the fallout of what became known as the “Escalante Affair”).⁹ Shortly before Castro took that step, amid flourishing rumors in Havana of rising tension between Fidel and the PSP, the resident Yugoslav ambassador, quoting a “completely reliable source,” told a fellow communist envoy that Fidel Castro had recently stated that, despite being “completely aware” of and “extremely grateful” for Soviet help, he was nonetheless “considering the idea of revolution according to the Chinese.” Belgrade’s representative, besides reporting internal rifts within the Cuban leadership over whether to take a sharply anti-Yugoslav tone in its publications (i.e., echoing the Chinese rather than the Soviet line on the topic), in general described Fidel Castro as being “under [Chinese] influence” as compared to the pro-Soviet “old Cuban communists” (i.e., of the PSP).¹⁰ To make matters worse for Moscow, that same month, Castro’s visiting interior minister, Ramiro Valdés, had hinted at Beijing’s rising appeal for the Cuban revolutionaries when he noted that the Chinese were doing a better job of spreading their influence “on every continent,” and scolded that “the Russians must do this as well.”¹¹

Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali speculate that it was in part over concern that Havana might be drifting towards Beijing in the wake of the “Escalante Affair,” that Nikita Khrushchev decided in the late spring of 1962 to deploy nuclear weapons—an action he hoped would, aside from other consequences, firm up the somewhat shaky Soviet-Cuban connection.¹² Castro agreed to the deployment during a visit to Cuba by a Soviet delegation (under the cover of an agricultural mission) in late May/early June 1962. Over the summer, the secret Soviet deployment went forward, amid furtive consultations with the Cubans during missions to Moscow by Defense Minister Raúl Castro in July and by Emilio Aragonés and Che Guevara in late September/early October. The Soviet and Cuban records of these consultations still have not been declassified but the Chinese documents confirm one well-known anecdote that up to now has only been reflected in oral history. Asked what he would do if the Americans reacted aggressively to the missile deployment, Khrushchev told Aragonés and Che that he would “send the Baltic fleet.”¹³ Che confirmed this account to the Chinese

Ambassador in Havana Shen Jian: “They kept blathering, for example, that they would send their Baltic Fleet. They also told us that they preferred actions to hollow statements, and that the mighty Soviet Union would deliver a destructive strike upon anyone who dared to invade Cuba, etc. At the time we believed their words were true.” But, crucially, Che Guevara’s revelations (during their conversation on 1 December) post-dated the crisis. The Cubans maintained secrecy regarding Operation ANADYR (the Soviet code-name for the deployments), including from the Chinese—and at times awkwardly so, as is evident from a Chinese record of a conversation, included below, between Shen Jian and Guevara shortly after the latter returned from the Soviet Union.

Of all the top Cuban leaders, “Che” was the closest to the Chinese philosophically and ideologically, given his backing (and fairly dogmatic and doctrinaire support, critics felt) for armed struggle and the most rapid implementation of “revolutionary” economic measures. As early as the summer of 1959 he had contacted Chinese diplomats in other countries to express interest in establishing closer Sino-Cuban political and economic relations (including Chinese sugar purchases); his November 1960 visit to Beijing and discussions with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai (the extensive translated Chinese records are reproduced here) had yielded an increase in those ties, including an agreement for Beijing to buy more Cuban sugar and extend a long-term interest-free loan; and the Chinese documents here testify to his close contacts with Beijing’s diplomats in Havana, before and after the missile crisis, even as the relationship later deteriorated, in 1965.¹⁴

When Che met Shen Jian on 13 October 1962—just four days before the Chinese diplomat left Havana for an ill-timed, long-planned trip home for a “holiday,” which caused him to miss the highpoint of the impending missile crisis—the two had a wide-ranging discussion of various topics, including the prospects for revolution in Latin America, but the current state of Soviet measures to defend Cuba’s security against the ever-looming threat of US aggression was a prime topic for discussion. (So, too, was continued Sino-Soviet sparring over Albania, which “distressed” Che, who wished the polemics would cease and insisted that Cuba would not be “pushed to the battlefield” of the rival communist powers.) In response to Shen Jian’s probing, Che (perhaps uncomfortably) evaded giving a revealing description of his recent conversations in the Soviet Union. He claimed confidence in Moscow’s “very clear” backing by stating unequivocally that a US invasion would trigger World War III—yet he admitted a lack of clarity regarding precisely “what specific form” the Soviet support would take. By the time they met again—in another conversation presented below—after the Soviets had withdrawn their missiles (and Shen Jian had returned from China), Che would

both apologize for his lack of candor at their previous talk and grumble openly about his disillusionment with the Soviets for removing their missiles under pressure from the Americans.

During the crisis in late October, Shen Jian's absence undoubtedly deprived China's embassy in Havana of the possibility of some high-level contacts (both with the Cubans and fellow diplomats) facilitated by the relationships the ambassador had established. Yet, contrary to Cheng Yinghong's assertion that "the Chinese were simply forgotten by the Cubans during the crisis,"¹⁵ the cables sent by the acting ambassador, chargé d'affaires Huang Wenyou, indicate that throughout the immediate crisis (i.e., in late October following JFK's 22 October speech announcing the discovery of the Soviet missiles) the Chinese saw a steady stream of important Cuban figures to gain information and assessments. These did not include Fidel or Raúl Castro or others at the highest level, but did include well-informed persons such as Joaquín Ordoqui, a member of the leadership council; the interior minister; a Chilean economist advising Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos; and representatives of the foreign ministry and the military's general staff (including military intelligence). The PRC Embassy even developed a relationship with Che Guevara's mother and other people in his circle, like one "Madam Moke" (transliteration) who kept the Chinese up to date on Che's thinking at the time of the crisis. Certainly, the Cubans' attention was focused on the United States and the Soviet Union—and diplomatically, Foreign Minister Raúl Roa seemed to consult more closely with ambassadors of such countries as Brazil and Yugoslavia¹⁶—yet they did not entirely "forget" about the Chinese.¹⁷

If anything, in fact, the Chinese were even more distracted than the Cubans, since Beijing was in the midst of its own crisis—and an actual shooting war, not a threatened one. Its border conflict with India, simmering for more than three years, had erupted into large-scale fighting on two Himalayan fronts in the second half of October 1962, raising the prospect of all-out war between the two most populous countries in Asia (and the world). The interaction between the two coincidental crises remains murky but one factor noticed at the time was that the Soviets, alarmed at the prospect of possible thermonuclear war with the United States, seemed to make a stab at closing ranks with the Chinese despite their feuding. Moscow had cultivated good relations with New Delhi and its leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, but in the midst of the missile crisis, on 25 October, a *Pravda* editorial on the Sino-Indian conflict appeared to side with Beijing.¹⁸

But any notion of Sino-Soviet rapprochement as a result of the Cuban crisis proved short-lived. The Chinese harshly criticized Khrushchev's decision on 28 October to remove

the missiles as a capitulation to the American aggressors, and the massive pro-Cuban rallies that the Chinese organized in Beijing, Tianjin, and other cities in the ensuing days (as well as blood drives and other symbolic gestures) were widely viewed by observers as less serious measures to back Cuba than implicit rebukes to Moscow.¹⁹ China's diplomats in Cuba also flaunted their solidarity. "As should have been expected, the Chinese have not missed a chance to exploit the temporarily unfavorable for us situation," cabled the Soviet ambassador in Havana, Aleksandr Alekseev, on 2 November. Juxtaposed with the seeming let-down from Moscow, Beijing's bellicose "pseudo-revolutionary statements," when reprinted in the local press, "flattered the excited Cubans." Worse, he reported, PRC embassy officials "went to the masses" to exhort them to fight the American imperialist aggressor, and ostentatiously appealed to the Cubans' "sentimental feelings" by donating blood to "cement the Chinese-Cuban friendship." Alekseev judged that "these cheap methods of propaganda did not have much success," but admitted that they intensified Cubans' "confusion," which had touched "not only common people, but also a number of Cuban leaders."²⁰

Meeting with an East European communist leader on 30 October, just two days after agreeing to withdraw the missiles from Cuba, Khrushchev crowed that the peaceful resolution of the crisis belied Beijing's claim that the Cold War was destined to end in a military clash—and in the process mocked Mao Zedong's disdain for their common, thermonuclear-armed enemy. "This clash (and we were truly on the verge of war) demonstrated that war today is not inevitably destined by Fate, that it can be avoided," he told Czechoslovakia's Antonín Novotný on 30 October. "The Chinese claim was therefore once again refuted, as well as their assessments of the current era, the current balance of forces. Imperialism, as can be seen, is no paper tiger; it is a tiger that can give you a nice bite in the backside. That is why one has to be careful of it..."²¹ Khrushchev was deeply upset by Chinese insinuations that he had shown weakness by retreating before the imperialists. "The Chinese demonstrated for three days in Beijing," he complained at a party plenum in November. "If this is their way of fighting imperialism, the imperialists could not give a damn." Khrushchev praised his own wisdom, which allowed the Soviet Union and the United States to avoid the fate of two stubborn goats on a narrow bridge: when neither yielded, both fell into the gully below.²²

In meetings with Chinese diplomats in Havana, described in their cables home printed here, Cuban officials warmly thanked China for its support. "China's support to Cuba in prompt organization of demonstrations has been a great encouragement to us," a Cuban foreign ministry aide handling relations with socialist countries

told Huang Wenyou on 31 October. "We feel very grateful." A colleague gushed: "China's statement has increased our strength. The Chinese government and people are, indeed, a government of revolution and people of revolution." The next day, trade minister Alberto Mora Becerra, noting a pro-Cuban *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*) editorial, pronounced himself "grateful" and "satisfied" with the support from the "Chinese people," whom he termed "our real brothers and comrades."

Despite the politeness, at least some Cubans obviously felt some dissatisfaction at the lack of a higher-level channel to the Chinese even as they negotiated with Anastas Mikoyan, Khrushchev's personal emissary, against the backdrop of acute resentment and bewilderment at Moscow. Attending the Soviet national day celebration at Moscow's embassy on 7 November—at which, naturally, Mikoyan was the featured guest—Che Guevara took Huang Wenyou aside and requested Ambassador Shen Jian's urgent return from China, "for there were lots of things to do."

At this sensitive juncture, the Chinese embassy noted Cuban discretion in discussing with foreigners their disagreements with the Soviets, and on 2 November informed Beijing that they believed it wise not to take the initiative to discuss the "very complex" Soviet-Cuban relationship. Accordingly, the chargé d'affaire had received formal instructions from the foreign ministry to say as little as possible regarding the Mikoyan-Castro negotiations or reports of Soviet-Cuban discord. "With respect to the Cuban-Soviet relationship, [you] should not speak but listen," Beijing directed its embassies, in Cuba and elsewhere, on November 6.

Despite that admonition, China's position was made clear to all. Reporting to his government on the Soviet embassy national day reception in Havana, Czechoslovakia's envoy noted, despite the "warm feelings and openness" on the surface, the persistence of "doubtful tones regarding the USSR's approach." The Chinese state news agency Xinhua, he added, was "making a special effort to feed those feelings with [its] blatant nonsensical information in a bulletin that the local press willingly accepts. There was even a comment about a new Munich...."²³ China's embassy in Moscow, meanwhile, privately transmitted scornful analyses of what it termed the "fiasco" of Khrushchev's diplomacy, harshly condemning his "conciliatory" and "submissive" agreement to withdraw the missiles, which it termed an appeasement of the aggressive imperialists that would bear "extremely bitter fruits" for the cause of revolution (see its cables of 31 October and 2 November 1962, included below).

When Shen Jian finally returned to Havana at the end of November, the documents show, he met in quick succession with Foreign Minister Roa, Che Guevara, and President

Dorticos, sending home lengthy reports of each conversation. Their conversations ran the gamut, from reviewing the recent crisis and Mikoyan's just-concluded visit (with all critical of the Soviets, and Che, predictably, most acerbic), to Shen Jian's briefing (and the Cubans' questions) on the Sino-Indian border clashes, to reassessing the prospects for revolution in Latin America, to a discussion of plans for the next period in bilateral relations.

These higher-level conversations were indeed polite, even cordial and friendly. Roa formally expressed his government's appreciation for their support during the crisis; Che began by apologizing for his lack of candor about the Soviet missiles when they had last spoken, just before Shen Jian had left for China in mid-October, and commiserated over respective experiences of (alleged) betrayal by the Soviets; Dorticos effusively thanked Shen Jian for the gifts of a newly-published Chinese edition of Fidel Castro's works and the latest Spanish-language volume of Mao Zedong's writings; the Cubans offered sympathy toward China's stand in the stand-off with India, and shared jibes at Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Taken collectively, these Chinese documents, in particular, offer a snapshot of the Sino-Cuban dialogue and mutual attitudes, allowing a comparison with the immediately preceding high-level Soviet-Cuban dialogue now available with the release of essentially the full Soviet record of Mikoyan's exchanges with his Cuban hosts.²⁴

To many observers, the Cubans' angry refusal or reluctance to cooperate with Mikoyan and the Soviets—on issues ranging from foreign inspection of the missiles' removal to the continuing US overflights to Castro's insistence on evacuation of Guantanamo as one of his "5 Points"—suggested a congruence to Mao Zedong's extremist views. "It is the Chinese that are the instigators of the intransigent position of the Cuban Government," Yugoslavia's foreign minister confidentially told a foreign diplomat, attributing Beijing's actions in Havana to its "vast plans" to contest Moscow for influence in the communist world.²⁵ A Czechoslovak diplomat, speaking to a communist colleague, observed that Cuban leaders, feeling "alone" after Khrushchev's agreement with Kennedy, were "influenced" by China's strident position, as was evident from Mikoyan's difficulties during his protracted stay.²⁶

Yet, while the Chinese documents suggest that Shen Jian (and by extension Beijing) benefitted from the still-raw Cuban disappointment with the Soviets, it seems an overstatement to conclude, as does Cheng Yinghong, that Khrushchev's "humiliating retreat" in Cuban Missile Crisis "reinforced Cuba's tilt toward China."²⁷ For one thing, the Chinese documents finally provide *one* side of the Sino-Cuban dialogue, but we still lack *any* real internal, contemporaneous Cuban sources on how they viewed that relationship. And, for

another, some other diplomatic records from Havana—some published elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*—suggest that the Cubans may not have been completely happy or satisfied with China's reaction to the missile crisis. After meeting with Raúl Roa on 29 October, the Yugoslav ambassador reported, in the midst of a lengthy conversation, the Cuban foreign minister had noted "that they didn't have time to think about the Chinese and their stupidities." The representative from the country endlessly blasted by Beijing as "revisionist" further added that the conversation with Roa "was held in the familiar atmosphere as among friends, with some pranks on the account of their 'great friends' the Chinese and others."²⁸

But what about Fidel Castro? Absent internal Cuban evidence it is impossible to say for sure, but contemporaneous Soviet-bloc documents suggest that he, too, was peeved or at least disappointed at China's behavior. Moscow's ambassador in Havana reported that at the end of a conversation about the missile crisis on 23 October the Cuban leader had "touched upon the Chinese-Indian conflict and said that the actions of our Chinese comrades"—an evident allusion to reports that PRC forces had launched attacks along the disputed border—"complicate the positions of the Cubans both internally and in its international plans." According to the Soviet envoy, Castro even described Beijing's actions as "insults" and noted that the Chinese were "hinting to us to hush up our press about this event."²⁹ Of course, at that moment Castro and Khrushchev were standing steadfast against Washington, but even after Soviet-Cuban divergences arose the Kremlin boss's handling of the crisis, that did not necessarily mean the Cuban leader felt gratitude toward Mao Zedong. On 12 November, a cable from the Polish ambassador in Havana, Bolesław Jeleń, quoted Raul Valdes Vivo (then the editor-in-chief of a major publication, *Hoy* [*Today*], later a senior communist official and intelligence officer), as saying that Fidel Castro felt "embittered" by the Chinese reaction to the crisis. While Warsaw Pact nations had immediately put their military forces on alert (to one extent or another) after Kennedy's speech on 22 October, China had hesitated and reacted strongly only after Khrushchev had announced the withdrawal of the missiles six days later. Despite its distance, China *could* have indirectly yet concretely aided Cuba's cause by using force against the Nationalist Chinese-controlled offshore islands (i.e., against Mazu and Jinmen), which would have distracted the Americans, forcing them to worry about a potential military clash in the Far East should Washington need to defend Taiwan. Instead, Valdes Vivo complained (purportedly echoing Fidel Castro), China had "exacerbated the situation [on the border] with India, something that does not help Cuba."³⁰

Coincidentally or not, Anastas Mikoyan—clearly reaching for any possible argument to salve Cuban dissatisfaction with Moscow and prevent them from seeing Beijing as a better ally or potential savior—egged on the Cubans to consider such arguments. On 20 November, at a particularly difficult juncture in his talks with Fidel Castro, who vociferously disputed the reliability of Kennedy's non-invasion pledge, Mikoyan stressed that the Americans were unlikely to invade Cuba because, while Washington enjoyed a favorable "correlation of forces" in the Caribbean, the communist advantage elsewhere in the world, in Berlin and other places, "binds the Americans, ties down their hands." Reporting to Khrushchev on the talk, Mikoyan recounted: "I noted that it would be useful, if the Chinese could strike against Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Macao."³¹

Mikoyan naturally did not repeat such arguments when he met with socialist diplomats in Havana, since among those present was China's Huang Wenyou (Shen Jian had not yet returned from Beijing), shortly before he left Havana. (Following Beijing's strict orders, the Chinese chargé d'affaires not only "did not say a single word during the cocktail party," an Eastern European diplomat present reported, but when Mikoyan—who had made a point of reminiscing about the allegedly close Sino-Soviet coordination during the 1956 Hungarian "counter-revolution"—mingled with the guests, he backed off and didn't even request a translation of the remarks.³²)

But when he met with Soviet-bloc diplomats in Washington (where he stopped at the end of November on the way home from Cuba) on 29 November, without Mao's minion present at the home of Soviet ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Mikoyan felt no compunctions about teeing off on Beijing for its behavior during the Cuban crisis—and expressed confidence that the Cuban leadership agreed with his and Moscow's view of their "totally wrong" Chinese behavior. A Hungarian diplomat present summarized Mikoyan's account:

Comrade Mikoyan spoke very negatively about China's activity in Cuba. He said that with their ultra left-wing views the Chinese confused some of the [Cuban] leaders, especially mid-level leaders, but they practically failed to help upset the enemy. For instance, they could have occupied Quemoy [Jinmen] and Matsuo [Mazu] or Macao without any real risk. Instead, they were sending hundreds of thousands of petitions and attacked India, whereby they managed to turn India, at least temporarily, into a country supporting the western camp, to disrupt the Indian Communist Party and give a chance to the Indian right-wing to gain ground, etc.³³

In a more elaborate account of Mikoyan's remarks, Khrushchev's emissary was more detailed, and more scathing. Praising the Cuban populace's behavior despite many economic woes as well as the county's "flawless" military measures, he contrasted this with the feckless attitude of the Chinese:

Intensive activity had been undertaken by the Chinese; they had organized blood donations, sent resolutions, etc. This activity, however, has had no influence on the leadership of Cuba. Before his departure, Khrushchev was told by Castro that Cuba was with the USSR and would continue to be with it. In this connection Mikoyan reiterated some of the arguments that he had used in discussions with Cuban representatives, concerning the pseudo-revolutionary "positions" of the Chinese. The Chinese are very active in the use of revolutionary clichés, but have done virtually nothing useful for Cuba. Soviet garrisons were in Cuba, and if it came to a fight, they would give their lives, and not just give blood in a clinic...³⁴

Rather than "attacking Macao or Hong Kong and thus complicating the relationship of the USA with her allies Portugal and Britain," Mikoyan again complained, China had attacked India ("a neutral country") and was even courting Pakistan, a member of "aggressive" US-led alliances. Warming to the theme (and preaching to the choir), he compared China to the "ultra-left" Soviet faction that had resisted Lenin's "sober" policy in signing the Brest-Litovsk treaty in 1918, and lamented that Beijing's actions toward India had undercut the positions of friendly forces (e.g., Defense Minister Krishna Menon, who had been forced to resign, and the Communist Party of India) and strengthened right-wingers.³⁵

When he insisted that the Cuban leaders, including Fidel Castro, had eventually come around to the Soviet point of view, Mikoyan was putting the most positive possible spin on his difficult mission. Moreover, it is clear that not all of the "*barbudos*" were completely convinced by his arguments, and that the Chinese professions of revolutionary solidarity appealed to some—notably Che Guevara. Soviet-Cuban disagreements (over the recent past and, more ominously, over the future) clearly persisted, as the Chinese records of Shen Jian's talks with high-level Cubans after he returned to Havana suggest. When Cuban communist Carlos Rafael Rodríguez visited Moscow in December 1962 and met with Khrushchev—the first post-crisis meeting between a senior Cuban figure and the Soviets—Rodríguez admitted frankly at the outset of their meeting that "the shock" of the Soviet actions had not

entirely subsided for Cubans.³⁶ So wild was the speculation and pervasive the uncertainty concerning the extent of the evident Cuban displeasure at Moscow's actions that in late December 1962, according to a newly obtained and translated cable from the Netherlands' ambassador in Washington, US Secretary of State Dean Rusk raised the possibility that in the coming days Fidel Castro "may announce a 'change of policy' which would boil down to a break with the Russians followed by a reorientation either in the Chinese-Albanian direction, or a Titoist line." (These alternatives seem fairly mutually incompatible, but such was the state of Rusk's reported speculation; other alternatives he mentioned, allegedly on the basis of recent intelligence, were that the "extreme militant wing of the Cuban communist party could overthrow Castro with the aid of the Russian troops" or, conversely, that the "moment could be seized for a revolution which would be directed not only against Castro but also against the Russians present.")³⁷

Ultimately, however, despite their admitted shock, the Cuban leadership grudgingly decided that practicality dictated that they patch up relations with the Soviets—both economically and militarily, they depended on Moscow's aid, and knew the Chinese could not replace it. France's ambassador in Havana perceptively observed on 15 November, with Mikoyan still deeply engaged in secret and apparently difficult negotiations, that

The sympathies of the "Fidelistas" are far more with the Chinese, but since the latter cannot do anything for them in practical terms, be it for providing supplies or even more for providing fuel, they have to accept Russia's tutelage, and we can sense that this tutelage is becoming unbearable for the "men of the Sierra"—those, at least, who have not joined the opposition since their leader officially declared last December that he was a "Marxist-Leninist".³⁸

Behind closed doors, after considerable beating around the bush, the Cubans finally broached the subject directly to Mikoyan just before he left Havana after three weeks of sometimes contentious negotiations. "With concern to my hints about whether there was not a Chinese influence in their consideration of the Cuban events," Mikoyan cabled Khrushchev on 26 November, Defense Minister Raul Castro said "directly" that, while some Cubans undoubtedly sympathized with the Chinese line, the leadership included "not one adherent." "Chinese diplomats are trying warm to us, they invite us to lunches, engage in conversations, but we try to keep them at a distance," the defense minister was quoted as saying (a state-

ment that can now be tested alongside the Chinese records of the high-level conversations between China's ambassador and such figures as Roa, Guevara, and Dorticos in the coming days). In sum, Mikoyan reported, "Raul gave an open analysis of the Chinese government in connection with the Cuban crisis, which coincides with ours."³⁹

Nevertheless, when another senior member of the leadership, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, journeyed to Moscow a couple of weeks later, he found it necessary to clarify explicitly Cuban sentiments regarding China's role in the crisis and influence, if any, on Havana. According to Rodriguez's record of his talk with Khrushchev (with Mikoyan present) in the Kremlin, the Soviet leader stressed that despite making a tactical retreat in Cuba the Soviets were not "in any way on the defensive, I insist, not anywhere, even in Cuba," but rather still on the offensive. "But the Cubans did not understand us," Khrushchev complained indignantly to Rodriguez, "and they began to attack us in their press, using the words of the Albanians and the Chinese. If you are in favor of this position, please tell us so, and we promise you that we can shout more than the Albanians and the Chinese."

Rodriguez reassured him, even if, unlike Raul Castro, he admitted some sympathy for some Chinese positions among some in the leadership:

I wanted to make perfectly clear that in the attitude of Cuba during this crisis, not a trace of the Chinese position could be found, nor did Cuban positions derive from Chinese ones. I expressed that they knew well, and I did not wish to hide it from them, that among our leaders there were some who sympathized in concrete ways with some of the positions of our Chinese comrades, but I wished to explain how, in this crisis, even the comrades that felt more sympathy toward some Chinese positions found the attitude of the Chinese government erroneous, and that the solidarity they had expressed was too late and not sufficiently enthusiastic.⁴⁰

Rodriguez's visit, however, failed to fully clear the air, and when the Soviet deputy foreign minister, Vasilii V. Kuznetsov (who had been deeply involved in the post-crisis negotiations in New York City with US representatives Adlai E. Stevenson and John J. McCloy), visited Cuba in early January, his exchanges with the Cubans, and Fidel Castro in particular, remained tense, dispatches from East-bloc diplomats in Havana reveal.⁴¹ Sensing the continuing gap, Khrushchev sent Fidel Castro an extraordinary 30-page letter at the end of the month, explaining his thinking on the Cuban Missile Crisis and venting rage at the Chinese (without mentioning them by name)⁴²:

We understood that our country could be pulled into a war in the Caribbean Sea region. And this means that the war would become a world war... And we accepted this with full understanding of our internationalist duty. This is not resolutions, this is not cursing of imperialism, with which it cannot be weakened. As a Belorussian proverb goes, you curse a landlord, and he only gets fatter. This is truly so. One can curse imperialism as much as you want, but he won't lose any weight from this, it will not be weakened, and its insolence will not lessen. Imperialism takes into account only real force. It does not recognize anything else. Therefore, one can call imperialism a paper tiger, manure [*navoz*], or what not, but if imperialism does not see that there is real force behind these words... it will not be deterred, and its insolence and aggressiveness will not diminish.⁴³

Khrushchev also, again clearly if not explicitly, echoed the arguments Mikoyan had made to Cubans about China's failure to, in effect, put their money where their mouth was—they loudly proclaimed their support for Cuba, but did not take action (e.g., attacking or threatening to attack the off-shore islands or Hong Kong) when it might have actually mattered:

You may have observed that certain people and groups, and even the leaders of certain socialist countries, who limited themselves to observing the crisis, started to get agitated and to pontificate on the ways in which one should have acted during the crisis, criticizing those who carried the burden of the struggle. They say that we should have proceeded in this or that way, taken such-and-such a step, although they themselves took no steps and held themselves at the sidelines of the real struggle. We may rightly ask these critics why they, at the height of the crisis, did not take any step—verbal or material—that would have demonstrated their willingness to aid Cuba, to march with her if war broke out.⁴⁴

In this letter Khrushchev invited the Cuban leader to pay a visit to the USSR to engage in face-to-face conversations and chart a path forward in Soviet-Cuban relations.



Not until Fidel Castro took that lengthy trip to the Soviet Union that spring (i.e., late May-early June 1963), conducting numerous conversations with Nikita Khrushchev, did the two seem to have fully aired their mutual disagreements and/or misunderstanding regarding the events of the crisis.

Unfortunately, as of this writing, the detailed Soviet records of those May 1963 Khrushchev-Castro conversations remain sealed, but we know that, among other things, they discussed the Chinese aspect of the missile crisis. Khrushchev recounted his conversations with Castro at a Presidium (Politburo) meeting on 7 June 7:

I said [to Castro]: “instead of concentrating our revolutionary efforts against the enemy, they [the Chinese] opened fire on us. Who profited from this? The revolutionary forces? No, the imperialist forces profited from this, from the fragmentation and dispersion of the revolutionary forces.” In a word, we talked a lot, approximately in this spirit. We left it [the conversation], then picked up again. And now, it seems, all of this, of course, had a result.⁴⁵

Indeed, after that intense bout of Soviet-Cuban summitry, bilateral relations improved – something that did not escape Beijing’s attention. On July 4 (just when a high-powered CCP delegation led by Deng Xiaoping went to Moscow for talks that put the last nail in the coffin of the Sino-Soviet alliance) the Chinese Foreign Ministry reported anxiously that after Castro’s visit to the USSR, “the rightists [in Cuba] became relatively more active while the leftists turned silent.” Even China’s best friend, Che Guevara, whom Shen Jian questioned about Castro’s visit, refused to discuss the subject. Some days later, when Che was in Algeria, he appeared cautiously supportive of the Chinese position in the quarrel with the USSR but whatever private misgivings he or Castro may have had, in public Havana evaded taking sides.⁴⁶ Reflecting the unsettled situation, despite the successful Castro-Soviet summit, some Soviet-bloc diplomats in the summer of 1963 worried that Cuba’s economic woes might lead to an increase in Chinese influence on the island, and fretted that the Havana authorities seemingly did nothing to impede the PRC embassy from “freely” spreading incendiary anti-Soviet propaganda to which at least middle- and low-level Cuban cadres were “strongly attracted.”⁴⁷ “One could seriously feel the Chinese Communist Party’s influence on Cuban politics,” a Czech foreign ministry analyst complained to a Hungarian colleague, detecting comparable “dogmatism, adventurism, and subjectivism” and citing Havana’s aspiration to become a “center of revolution” through the “mechanical application” of Cuba’s experience.⁴⁸ Indeed, the Cubans were by no means fully in the Soviets’ pocket—like Beijing, Havana refused to join the nuclear test-ban treaty Khrushchev signed with the Americans (and British) in August 1963 (although, a Czech document records, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez ardently tried to reassure Soviet-bloc comrades that Cuba’s stance on

this and other issue was “[its] own and absolutely not that of the PRC”).⁴⁹ Trying to maintain a balanced position, Castro even ventured a brief attempt to mediate between the communist giants upon learning of Khrushchev’s overthrow in October 1964.

That effort would fail, however, and Sino-Cuban relations would soon plummet, leading inevitably, in the zero-sum realm of the inter-communist dispute, to a tangible warming in relations with Moscow. Havana’s criticism of China (and increasing tilt toward the Soviets) became particularly evident after unsuccessful visits to Beijing by, first, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez in December 1964 and then, two months later, Che Guevara. Though probably the Cuban leader most ideologically sympathetic to the Chinese, Che ironically played a key part in the final virtual break between Havana and Beijing. During his hastily-arranged trip to China in February 1965 to try to salvage relations and convince the Chinese to make concessions to ameliorate worsening Sino-Soviet tensions, Mao did not receive him (unlike his earlier visit in 1960 or most Cuban official delegations since then), and senior officials Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, who did, rejected his overture.⁵⁰ The following month, meeting with Soviet-bloc communist leaders in Eastern Europe (and attending a meeting of communist parties in Moscow which China boycotted, symbolizing the split in the movement⁵¹), Raúl Castro decried the CCP’s “erroneous positions” and recounted Mao’s rejection of the Cuban attempt at Sino-Soviet mediation, including his harsh accusation that the Cuban leaders were afraid of imperialism, the PRC, and their own people. “A series of divergences still exist in the relations between the USSR and Cuba,” the Cuban defense minister told Poland’s Władysław Gomułka, “but they are indeed bigger with China.”⁵² Fidel Castro, who had for the first time begun openly criticizing the Chinese publicly in mid-March, was blunt and scathing on the subject to a visiting Czechoslovak military delegation in early April:

In the spirit of his last speeches at the University of Havana from the 10th of March and his speech in commemoration of the 13th of March, Fidel Castro sharply criticized Beijing’s approach to the issue of the ICM [International Communist Movement] and help to [North] Vietnam.... Beijing’s approach prevents effective assistance of the socialist camp countries [to North Vietnam], and also blocks the possibility of negotiations. Beijing’s conduct is unprincipled and inconsistent. Its objective is to damage the Soviet prestige and to promote at all costs its own selfish interests. He stressed that Beijing undermines the unity of the ICM only to assume a leading role. It is willing to sacrifice everything to this goal - even Cuba, which

it does not care about and whose very existence it is also willing to sacrifice in its efforts to achieve hegemony in the ICM. However, he [Fidel Castro] believes that even in the PRC, there are reasonable people who disagree with this narrow nationalistic policy, whose main protagonist is Mao Zedong. He believes that after his departure, these factions will be more able to gain prominence.

On the other hand, he emphasized the wide and selfless assistance provided by the USSR, without which the revolutionary and socialist Cuba could not even exist....⁵³

The pivot in early 1965 towards worse Sino-Cuban relations and greater cooperation between Havana and Moscow did not foreshadow an untroubled, immediate, or solid Soviet-Cuban alliance—simmering disagreements would persist, and flare into an open dispute in early 1968, as Castro once again purged members of the old communist party and hinted at accusations against the Soviets and some of their Eastern European allies for alleged interference in internal Cuban affairs.⁵⁴ Yet, the allure of the Chinese had faded (and the chaos of the Cultural Revolution did nothing to revive it), and Fidel Castro made his preference firm in late 1968, when he opted (despite considerable ambivalence and grumbling among Cubans) to support Moscow's invasion of Czechoslovakia that August to crush the Prague Spring (an act denounced by the Chinese). For the duration of the Cold War the Cubans would remain firmly in the Soviet camp, an affiliation only solidified in the 1970s when Mao Zedong welcomed Richard Nixon to Beijing and joined the (North) Americans—Castro's eternal foe—in a *de facto* alliance against the Soviets.⁵⁵ Asked during a conference in Havana in 2001 whether there was any chance Cuba might have tilted toward China in the Sino-Soviet split, especially in view of Mao's support for armed struggle and Khrushchev's behavior during the missile crisis, Castro paused, seemed perhaps to sigh, and said, approximately: I will give you my shortest answer ever—no. The fundamental reason, he went on, was Cuba's dependence on Soviet aid, and in particular regarding oil, in the face of the US embargo and economic pressure.⁵⁶ The implication was clear: the Chinese might talk loudly, and some Cuban revolutionaries liked at least part of what they were saying, but only the Soviets could act concretely to save the revolution.



The documents in this collection are mainly declassified records from the Chinese Foreign Ministry Archives in Beijing (see the source notes at the end of each translation for more

specific citations). For invaluable help in obtaining access to these materials, we thank Shen Zhihua and the Cold War International History Studies Center at East China Normal University, Shanghai. For supporting these extensive translations, we thank CWIHP director Christian Ostermann. We would also like to thank Zhang Tengfei in Beijing and Shi Po in Ningbo. The translations posed many challenges, but one particular problem, not completely solved, involved the double-translation/transliteration of names, places, organizations, etc., from Spanish to Chinese and then to English. We have tried to make correct identifications wherever possible, and apologize for any errors. For aid in identifying some mystery personages, we especially thank Cuban scholar Carlos Alzugaray Treto. In some cases we were not able to make firm identifications, and will be grateful for any further assistance (or correction) from readers, which may be reflected in the copies of the translations posted on the CWIHP website in its Digital Archive. - James G. Hershberg, Sergey Radchenko, Zhang Qian.



Document No.1

Excerpts of the Memorandum of the Conversation between Mao Zedong & Blas Roca Calderio, the Party Secretary of the Popular Socialist Party of Cuba, 28 April 1960

Time: 12 - 18:30 [Noon-6:30 pm], 28 April 1960
Venue: On a train resting in the suburbs of Tianjin
Present: [Mao Zedong, Blas Roca Calderio,] Deng Xiaoping, Yang Shangkun, Wu Xiuquan, Li Qixin
Interpreter: Cai Tongkuo
Recorder: Deng Lanzhen

Roca [in the original, "abbreviated as Luo below," not abbreviated here]: My situation this time is better than four years ago.

Chairman Mao (abbreviated as Chairman below): Good, [you] have notable changes. [I] couldn't have a good discussion with you back in 1956, too many people that time.

Roca: Your health is better than before.

Chairman: So so.

Roca: This bag is made of crocodile skin. I'm now pre-

sending it as a gift to you in the name of the Central Committee of the Popular Socialist Party [PSP] of Cuba. It might be useful since you often travel.

Chairman: Thanks very much. We have nothing to give you in return. What could I do? Please, Comrade Wu Xiuquan, help me out on this.

Roca: The second matter is that I'm now greeting you, in the name of Fidel Castro and other revolutionary leaders [of Cuba]. Fidel particularly asked me to greet you on his individual behalf.

Chairman: Thank him. On my own behalf as well as in the name of the entire Chinese people and the Central Committee, I'm saluting Cuba's revolution. We very much welcome Cuba's revolution. Cuba's revolution is a great revolution, a revolution of global significance. The Cuban people do not fear imperialists, [they are] a brave people. Being next to a huge tiger without paying the slightest attention to it, you just break down the superstition. There is a Chinese idiom, "see no people in one's eyes" [*muzhong wuren*]: in your eyes, there is no American imperialism, no tiger. To you the US can do nothing. The Cuban revolution has been victorious for 15 months.

Roca: The revolution keeps advancing, for which American imperialism feels loathing. It exhausts all sorts of measures to launch attacks upon our revolution. In the past, it was American newspapers, journalists, agents, and capitalist monopolies who made a fuss against Cuba. Now, [US President Dwight D.] Eisenhower himself comes out to oppose the Cuban revolution.

Chairman: What else could he do? [He is] a paper tiger. The South Korean people support you. There is a large US army contingent there, Syngman Rhee had 25 divisions, and atomic bombs are also there. Who could predict that Syngman Rhee would have been defeated within days?⁵⁷ The problem is that people were left nowhere to go, just like you. Batista killed 20 thousand Cubans, Syngman Rhee likewise claimed lives of nearly 10 thousand people. Lao Tzu, the Chinese philosopher, observed, "How could one intimidate people with death while people fear no death?" Your past 30-year struggle steels you, two-and-half-year guerrilla warfare steels you, and the past year of the revolutionary regime steels you. They [counter-revolutionaries] could do nothing but kill. Yet [they] could

not kill all people. If one group of people are shot down, another group comes up.

I have read your documents which say [Cuba] is facing many difficulties, such as economic embargo, sabotage, Trujillo of the Dominican [Republic] attempting to attack, and the US equipping Batistanists. All of these [difficulties] were expected by you. [These difficulties,] in the worst scenario, would kill a few people, or drive you out of cities. The most important thing is that [these difficulties] would help make you better by steeling you.

In 1957, Castro was left with only 82 individuals, the number then suddenly dropped to 8—some say it should be 12—which is firmer, the group of 8 people, or the group of 82? It seems 8 people are more resolute, because they acquire experience. Your guns were not given by socialist countries, nor any Latin American country. It is Batista who gave you them.

[...] [sic]

Now imperialism and the bourgeoisie are also adopting a two-faced policy.

Roca: Imperialism always relies on two-faced policy.

Chairman: Yes, on one hand, [imperialism] deceives people by [promising] peace, on the other hand, [it] prepares for war. Not only does imperialism prepare to annihilate the Cuban revolution, it also plans to destroy the entire socialist camp.

Deng Xiaoping: [Imperialism] also wants to repress national independence movements.

Chairman: To national independence movements [imperialism] represses on one hand and deceives on the other. To Asia, Africa, and Latin America it too strikes on the one hand, and offers a carrot on the other [*yimianda yimianla*].

Roca: We have accumulated much experience regarding imperialism's two-faced policy. In April of 1898, the American Congress passed a resolution [the Teller Amendment] declaring that Cuba should become an independent and free country, but afterwards the US occupied Cuba with troops for as long as 4 years. Meanwhile, Puerto Rico became an American colony, and so did the Philippines. Now they still wish to occupy Cuba.

Chairman: They can't do it anymore.

Roca: In 1898, the US occupied Cuba in the name of helping Cuba gain independence, and cooked up the Platt Amendment [in 1901] which stipulated that the US could return to Cuba whenever it wishes. Ever since then, the US has adopted a two-faced policy towards Cuba: on one hand, supporting the Cuban government while on the other hand backing anti-government parties. Once the [Cuban] government stops obeying the US, [the US] pressures Cuba with these parties. Eisenhower once said that he liked Fidel Castro...

Chairman: Last January [1959] the US recognized you and welcomed Fidel Castro's visit to the US.

Roca: At that moment, American imperialism told Fidel, "you are the [Alexander] Kerensky of Cuba. You are being encircled by communists who will kick you out. Communists are everywhere." The Americans demanded that he persecute communists. Fidel did not listen.

Chairman: When did the visit to the US take place?

Roca: [Fidel Castro] went to the US the end of last April [1959] and returned to Cuba on 19 May. Now Eisenhower said that towards Cuba he has always been patient and friendly and that while he loves Cuba, the Cuban government pays no attention to American interests and decides to go against the US. These words are unfair. Who sent flights to bomb Cuba?

[...] [sic]

Chairman: If the Americans were civilized and practiced one-faced tactics, you would have a more difficult time in organizing militias. The US has a military base in your country, it also has [bases] in our country. It burns sugarcane in your place while sending planes here to air-drop agents. So we too are developing [a system of using] militia; so far 240 million militia [members] have been raised. Because the central government could not provide that many weapons to militias, [we] charge each province with the responsibility for equipment, for finding machine guns, rifles, mortars, light cannons, etc. to arm them. I wish that you could produce light weapons on your own. We could help when necessary, as long as the Soviet Union could help transport [them] there. We would give as much as you want. It's all right with us whether you would pay for them or not. Perhaps [receiving] without paying wouldn't be good as far as your national prestige is con-

cerned, let's set a price. If [you] can't afford now, pay later, in 50 years or 100 years, either of which will do.

You support us and we support you. You drive in a nail near the US which assists the world revolution and the world including China. The way of assistance is bringing down Batista, realizing land reform, implementing a series of progressive policies, including organizing militias. By doing these, one has helped oneself and also the people of the world.

Roca: I think that our most important contribution is founding an independent, self-reliant, and sovereign government which does not listen to Washington's orders. Only by doing this could land reform and other progressive measures be realized

Chairman: This government is better than [Indian leader Jawaharlal] Nehru's. Nehru opposes China and the Indian communist party, refuses to implement land reform and to organize militia. The imperialist capital in India stays untouched.

Roca: Nehru still wants to reach a compromise with British imperialism.

Chairman: On top of it, he borrows a huge amount of money from the US, worth 2.2 billion USD. Is the figure of US investment in Cuba 1 billion USD?

Roca: The investment is 700 million, and shrinking gradually. Companies that used to serve the US now serve Cuba. The land reform has transformed the properties possessed by the US into ones possessed by the Cuban people.

Chairman: Brave steps. Imperialism does not dare to do anything.

Roca: Fidel Castro mentioned that he has one more mission to complete. Some foreign telephone and electricity companies are yet to be expropriated.

Chairman: Expropriated with compensation or not? Consider compensating by issuing bonds. The Americans are rich. You could have the compensation settled in 30 or 40 years.

Roca: We prepare [to complete compensation] in 20 years.

Deng Xiaoping: The price could be set lower.

Roca: The US demanded 3000 Pesos for every caballeria [ka]. We gave it only 300 Pesos. They didn't agree. They said that they should be paid in cash with fair price and couldn't wait for 20 years. [They said] who knows what would happen in 20 years. The Cuban revolution, as Comrade Mao Zedong observes, is of global significance and of an ever greater importance to Latin American countries. It has become a model, which is exactly what the US fears.

Chairman: In your opinion, aren't Venezuela, Columbia, and Mexico the friendliest countries towards Cuba?

Roca: [Rómulo] Betancourt of Venezuela is a rascal, declaring himself a revolutionary while in fact he is only a dog of the Americans. He betrays the revolution. Venezuelans are supporting the Cuban revolution whole-heartedly. In Caracas, every day we could sell 500 copies of *Hoy*. Betancourt said that Venezuela would not attend the meeting of underdeveloped countries held by Cuba. He opposed the meeting. Yet the Venezuela foreign minister publicly announced that Venezuela would participate in the meeting.

Chairman: What countries will attend this meeting?

Roca: India, Indonesia, Egypt, Iraq, Guinea, Morocco, Tunisia, Philippines, and other Asian-African countries, all accepted the invitation. The US pressured them very hard not to attend. Eisenhower's visit to South American countries aims not at discussing peace, but persuading these countries not to participate in this meeting.⁵⁸

Chairman: When will the meeting open? Are Cambodia and Nepal invited? These two countries are better than the Indian government.

Roca: The opinion of the Cuban government is that all underdeveloped countries which joined the United Nations shall attend.

Chairman: China did not join the United Nations. We were "aggressors."

Roca: It won't last long.

Chairman: [We should] better prepare for a long [struggle]. We shall join the UN after our production surpasses the US. When, for example, the annual steel production reaches 100 million tons, things will turn good. Now

the US holds us in contempt. World imperialism, many nationalist states, revisionists such as Tito, all hold us in contempt.

Roca: Yet some other countries are supporting us.

Chairman: I have made a calculation. The imperialists and revisionists combined, people who oppose us, account for less than one tenth of the global population, [which means] nine tenths of the global population support China.

Roca: As far Columbia is concerned, its present government is reactionary, listening to the US; it privately opposes Cuba while in public it does not. Because Mexico's people support the Cuban revolution, Mexican president [Adolfo López] Mateos is now preparing to visit Cuba in the hope of winning domestic support.

This is the situation of the three countries. In general, Latin America's people are friendly towards Cuba while each government holds an antagonistic view towards Cuba.

Chairman: What about the attitudes of Brazil, Chile, and Argentina?

Roca: Brazil and Chile are wavering. As to Argentina and Paraguay, they hate the Cuban revolution.

Chairman: But their people are friendly [towards Cuba].

Roca: All Latin American peoples are friendly towards the Cuban revolution. We received support from the Chilean [communist] party, for example, which mobilized the people and sent cadres specialized in economic management to help us. The people of Argentina bought Cuba a plane. Several thousand young men from Chile, Argentina, and Ecuador registered to protect the Cuban revolution as volunteers. Eighty-two senators from Brazil are prepared to [publicly] support Cuba. Panama, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, etc., from Central America, offered great help to us. In Puerto Rico, because of the success of the Cuban revolution, the movement of people striving for national independence re-emerged. The US now calls Puerto Rico [an] Associated Free State. Insurgencies also took place in the Dominican Republic.

Chairman: Is the revolutionary movement in the Dominican Republic also powerful?

Roca: [It] has made progresses, but is facing difficulties.

Chairman: Temporarily being suppressed, [the Dominican revolution] will rise again.

Roca: The problem [for the Dominican revolution] is that the domestic organization has yet to be established.

Chairman: A weak [communist] party?

Roca: Weak, and headquartered abroad.

Chairman: The place [the Dominican Republic] is comparatively small.

Roca: All countries [of Central America] are small.

Chairman: What about Haiti?

Roca: The people's struggle is firm. With a good tradition, the Haitian people's will to struggle is resolute. For the moment, the Haitian people are suffering from terrible repression.

Chairman: It seems to me that these countries are too occupied with their internal affairs and will not threaten Cuba in terms of mounting attacks.

Roca: No. The US might attack us via Guatemala and Honduras. It could instruct the troops of these countries, via the peace committee of the Organization of American States, to join the intervention against Cuba. The US itself could send troops.

Chairman: Imperialism says that it's willing to tackle the problem by peaceful measures rather than by war.

Roca: But in Cuba, it will turn to war to solve the problem.

Chairman: This year Eisenhower won't [attack].

Roca: It's uncertain. Many say that he won't, because the US will hold an election and a meeting of world leaders. It is reasonable for the US not to attack Cuba. Yet American imperialism is unreasonable: whether it's going to be an election or a meeting, the US always wants to put down Cuba. Neither the election nor the leaders' meeting will bother them [the US], the question [for them] is that Cuban people have a resolute will.

Chairman: That is the basic question.

[...] [sic]

Chairman: Cuba is not a small country, but a big one, with over 100 thousand square kilometers, larger than China's Zhejiang Province, and with mountains everywhere.

Roca: There are three mountainous areas: Las Villas Province, Oriente Province, and Pinar del Rio Province. But on the plain war could also be waged, which we have learned.

I wish to stress the contribution of Fidel Castro, which is important. Tactically, we don't give too much publicity to the contributions of Fidel Castro. But it is he who initiated the struggle. When there were only 8 people left, he still refused to surrender. People worship him. He is a revolutionary, anti-imperialist soldier.

Chairman: Is there any possibility that he could accept communism?

Roca: Possibly. He was born in a small bourgeois family and now is leaning leftward. He could become a great communist leader among us, which is important.

Chairman: He is different from [Iraqi Prime Minister Abd al-Karim] Qasim who is an anti-communist.

Roca: Entirely different. He is also different from ordinary bourgeois politicians of Latin America. He is not obsessed with wealth nor does he indulge himself. He seeks only to fight gloriously to the last moment. In March, he made a 4-hour speech criticizing the anti-communists. He said "anti-communism" serves basically as a tool for imperialism to divide the country and suppress revolution.

Eisenhower attacked Fidel Castro's government saying that this government had betrayed the revolution. Fidel responded, "if we were true traitors of the revolution, Eisenhower would have embraced us in the same way one embraces [Spanish leader Francisco] Franco."

Now Fidel Castro has developed a good relationship with our communist party [of Cuba]. He often talks to us and is willing to foster a Marxist-Leninist position. A revolutionary should study Marxism-Leninism, he says. The [Communist] Party has a notable power. The minister of the Armed Forces [Raúl Castro] is one of us. Party members are in charge of the military leadership in Oriente and Mantanzas, and also participate in the leadership of Las Villas Province. In other words, three provinces out of six are in our hands.

Chairman: What about other provinces? [You] should keep working [to promote communism], and try to control the army. What does regime mean? A regime means army.

Roca: Camaguey Province is led by a person with backward political thoughts. The head of Pinar del Rio has a changeable character, sometimes for us and sometimes against. Three government ministers, along with the military force minister, are our men.

Chairman: In form, this is not a communist force. But in fact the major part is under communist leadership; it is under the joint leadership of the communist party and the 26th of July Movement.

Roca: It works by cooperation. The leader of the Air Force is also one of us. The problem is that [Cuba] has no planes.

Chairman: Not one?

Roca: There are few. I have raised this issue with Comrade Deng Xiaoping. Within the 26th of July Movement, the Head of National Coordination (head of the organizational department) is our man. Many other people of the Movement are too, for example, director of the National Land Reform Committee in which many important offices are taken by our party members. The National Bank is responsible for the industrialization of the country, the head of which [Ernesto “Che”] Guevara is also our man.

Chairman: When did Guevara join the Party?

Roca: He developed some connection with the Youth League while in Argentina, but he did not participate. Later in Guatemala, when [Jacobo] Arbenz [Guzman] was the president, he worked there and applied to join the communist party but was not permitted. In 1957, he applied again and was admitted by us. He isn't quite a cultivated member. His mind is yet in confusion. We patiently teach and persuade him, in the hope of enabling him to become a true [communist] party member, mature in thought.

Chairman: [He] should have a clear world outlook.

Roca: His world outlook is Marxist-Leninist. He has merit, is very loyal and loves the Party. Although sometimes he struggles to find the right way to work things out, he does try to do things properly.

Chairman: How old is he? And what about Raúl [Modesto Castro]?

Roca: Guevara is 30, Raúl 28, Fidel 32.

Chairman: Fidel Castro was 32 last year. Isn't he 33 this year?

Roca: I don't know if he is fully 33. [Fidel Castro was born 13 August 1926, so he was then 33—ed.]

Chairman: Your program does not confer much real power to the president. Is Castro happy or not?

Roca: He is the prime minister. The president is [Osvaldo] Dorticos. The president does not have much power.

Chairman: Nor does the chairman [of government] in our country. I was a chairman of no power, and now it is Comrade Liu Shaoqi. As the chairman of the Party, theoretically, I don't have power but in practice I do. Comrade [Liu] Shaoqi is the deputy chairman [of the Party]. Fidel Castro is the leader of 26th of July Movement, and meanwhile the Party and Revolutionary Guidance Committee are also supporting him.

I have read the report from the organization secretary of Las Villas Province, Comrade Peña's report, the draft program of your party, and the material composed by our own comrades on the situation and problems Cuba faces after its successful revolution. Short of time, I have read them only once, but I read them earnestly. Your [draft] program will not only make a difference in Cuba, but on other countries in the world it will also have an effect. Countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America all need to work out a program, one that fits their own circumstances. This program, in the case of China, is a combination of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and the practice of the Chinese revolution. [We must] take hold of this, the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, and then adjust it to [the] peculiarity of our own circumstances. I very much agree with your document which is a document of the revolution. At the present, [people] are scared by imperialism, and by the revolution; [but] you are not scared by imperialism or by the revolution. This thing [fearlessness] can combat revisionism.

Roca: Many things were written so as to combat revisionism, though they were not presented explicitly. Our party prepares to open up the representative assembly on 14 June. We have sent our invitation to you.

Roca [sic]: Thanks very much. Still I wish to learn about your opinion on our party program.

Chairman: I have read it only once. As far as our opinion is concerned, Comrade Deng Xiaoping later could discuss it with you. My opinion is entirely individual and for your reference only.

Roca: We have discussed this program with Fidel Castro.

Chairman: Was he in favor?

Roca: [He had] different views on two issues: one, the socialist transition problem, and the other, the bank nationalization problem.

Chairman: What did he make of the transition to socialism?

Roca: He thought this kind of phrasing was simply too blatant, better to be a bit implicit. With respect to bank nationalization, Fidel believed that there are alternatives to putting [the term] nationalization, into the program. For example, transfer banks into state ownership through [the purchase by] the National Bank.

Chairman: In your program, you should also mention national bourgeoisie and other Latin American countries. When it comes to factors favorable to Cuba, you should emphasize that peasants, accounting for 90 percent of the Cuban population, workers and the middle class, are on the side of the revolution and support the revolution; every country within the socialist bloc is behind you; the American people also support you. [...] [sic] How about revising it? First comes the support of the Cuban people, then the sympathy of people from other Latin American countries, third the support and sympathy of Asian and African countries, and fourth the support from the socialist bloc. Put the socialist bloc after the people of Latin American countries and Asian-African countries, and then mention the support of the American people. In this way, all are included. Please think about it.

[...] [sic]

Roca: Let me begin by thanking Comrade Mao Zedong and other comrades of the Central Committee for spending so much time in discussions with us. This is a tremendous help and support. Thank you all.

Chairman: Thank you.

Roca: I would love to express my views on these problems.

The view of paying more heed to national bourgeoisie and Latin American countries is correct. The program does not fully reflect our policy. We attach a great importance to this area and have made lots of efforts in this regard. Now there is a Cuban delegation visiting Latin American countries. Most of its members are from the party, representing Cuban intellectuals, workers, etc. They have received a great welcome in places like Argentina. Although the Argentine government banned people assembling to support Cuba, Argentine people still held a big meeting in support [of the delegation]. Tomorrow, on 23 April, Havana will host a big meeting of Latin American countries supporting the Cuban revolution. Participants are mostly professors, intellectuals, students, union leaders, peasants, etc. They made a statement in advance. Those who signed the statement were all important figures. Our ambassador to Mexico was a relatively leftist party member. For the sake of the work, we have replaced him with another person, more suitable for the ambassadorship.

Chairman: You should talk a bit more about Latin America in the program. Because it goes beyond being Cuba's program, it is the first socialist program among Latin American countries. It will become the reference document for all Latin American communist parties.

Deng [Xiaoping]: In particular it should stress that Cuba must ally with other Latin American countries to fight against imperialism.

Roca: Not enough attention has been given to the problem of the national bourgeoisie, which was also mentioned by Latin American comrades. They told me: when reflecting on problems, one's mind should not dwell on domestic circumstances alone. One should ponder issues of other Latin American countries. Therefore, reasonable emphasis on the problem of the national bourgeoisie is necessary. The problem is that under the current circumstances, many of us couldn't agree with this, and some people's views differ from ours sharply.

Chairman: It is not easy to convince Cuban leftists.

Roca: Nor is it easy to convince the bourgeoisie. Their political representatives, such as [Roberto Daniel] Agramonte [y Pichardo] in the past, hold a hostile attitude towards us. We are left no choice but to suppress them.

Chairman: They were bound to oppose you. There are no bourgeoisie who would not oppose you. So you also should have two means at your disposal [*yaoyou liangshou*]: carrot and stick [*youyao da, youyao la*].

Roca: Guevara gathered industrialists for a meeting. The industrialists were very happy, saying that Guevara spoke particularly clearly. Guevara said that they could contribute to the economy but shall not set foot in heavy industry. He also showed them which sectors are open for their investment and which are not.

Chairman: Did the bourgeoisie read your party program? Had the program been put on record?

Roca: They read, and this is a published document, though only a draft so far. We need to explain this program to the bourgeoisie, peasants, workers, and people, and to ask for their comments.

Chairman: Good.

Roca: With respect to the suggestion that workers should not raise excessive demands, we will ponder it. [In fact,] we paid attention to this problem when drafting the program. For example, we chose not to mention the idea of subsidizing the unemployed, because Cuba has 600 thousand jobless workers, and the economy could not bear it anymore. The only way left to eliminate unemployment is to increase employment opportunities. During the course of program-drafting, union leaders advanced a proposal requesting that the minimum wage be stipulated. The situation facing Cuba is like this: because some sectors generate high profits, a few workers therefore earn more. For example, in the electricity sector, telephone companies, tobacco industry, and brewage industry, workers receive higher salaries and could live a decent petty bourgeois lifestyle. Their salaries could be over ten times more than that of sugar industry workers, hence the present inequality. We could not bring down the present wage levels, because this is expected to meet with tremendous resistance. But we must reduce the gap between different wage levels.

Chairman: Our policy is similar: don't reduce the higher wage levels, but increase the lower ones.

Roca: It also has to do with the development of production. Improvement in the living standard depends on an increase in production and production efficiency. Cuban people know this point only too well. They donate their income to purchase airplanes and to develop industry, also aware that

excessive demands shall not be raised so as not to cause loss to the revolution. [They understand that] with revolution [developing], life will become better day by day; in order to obtain a better life, [one] has to defend revolution and prepare to sacrifice for it. This is acknowledged in the program.

As far as the 8-hour workday system is concerned, there are differences between urban and rural areas, between agriculture and industry, which should be taken into account. Although the 1933 revolution failed, the 8-hour workday system has become popular ever since. Before 1933, sugar industry workers had to work for nearly 12 hours [per day]; later an 8-hour workday system was implemented nation-wide. In 1964 [sic], between 8 thousand and 10 thousand workers in transportation followed a 6-hour workday system. When Batista assumed power, [he] demanded an increase in working hours regardless of the 8-hour workday system. Most workers did not obey him though. Therefore we must not retreat on this point [8-hour workday system]; instead, we shall go along with it, and be realistic. [After all, the] 8-hour workday system has been instituted for 26 years.

Chairman: Given that it has been instituted for 26 years, I agree that [you] do not abolish it. But does it have to be like this to all, be it a small firm or a big one, in agriculture or in the industry sector?

Roca: Normally it should be 8 hours. But it is not always the case for agricultural workers, who sometimes work 5 hours a day, sometimes 10 hours—in general, it is still 8 hours a day. Some workers work 9 hours which means providing 1 hour free labor to the government.

Chairman: The law stipulates an 8-hour workday system while workers voluntarily work one extra hour. This is good. Workers are willing to work for themselves. [You] must pay attention to the problem of consumption and accumulation. Let the people know the truth: production must surpass consumption.

Roca: The problem concerning the patriotic united front is a serious question. What form of political organization should be is under study. Castro's attitude is to oppose [holding] an election. He will embrace it only when social and economic reforms have reached an appropriate juncture but there is great pressure from Latin American countries.

Chairman: Will the election bring about disadvantages?

Roca: No, only advantages: we will win. Our party, the 26th of July Movement, and the Revolutionary Guidance Committee together could reap over 80 percent of the votes. Castro is not worried on this score. He only worries that the 26th of July Movement isn't quite an organized party, politically unconsolidated. Castro maintains that those bad elements in the revolution shall be eliminated first. Elections will become safer with the exposure of the bad elements. Castro told us to prepare the election. We will have further discussions on this problem. Castro's idea is that all leftist forces, including our party, the leftists of the 26th of July Movement, and the Revolution Guidance Committee, unite and establish a party. This is a question worth exploring. I have written articles in Cuba introducing China's Political Consultative Committee, with which Cuba is now familiar.

Chairman: Chinese democratic parties have no masses, be they workers, peasants, or students. The two organizations in your case are different: behind the Revolutionary Guidance Committee are students, and also the 26th of July Movement is backed by some people and the army. Our larger democratic parties have, at most, 20 or 30 thousand members, while smaller ones have only a few thousand. So we have an easy task here, but yours is difficult.

Roca: Ours is far more difficult. You made a very good point regarding the problem of peasants. The program is targeted against Batista, which is why all peasants are treated as part of the anti-Batista force. Yet there is a hierarchy within peasants, which was mentioned by Lenin. Our party, too, has noticed this problem; yet we didn't put it in an explicit manner in the program. This is my responsibility.

About [exercising] double ownership under the socialist system, this program is not yet a socialist program. It is only a program of transition to socialism, aiming at socialism, but its current tasks are national liberation and land reform. Its present tasks contains the seeds for the next stage, but it's again still in stage one.

Chairman: When you raise [the subject of] anti-individualism, you should have better tactics.

Roca: Naturally. We meant it to be against rural individual economy.

Chairman: Are there kulak households among the peasants?

Roca: Yes. But [we] won't touch the kulaks' properties, only the landlords'.

Chairman: Distributing land among peasants is a practice of bourgeois democratic revolution. Napoleon [Bonaparte] did this in the 18th century and gained support from peasants. Later the bourgeoisie did it again.

Roca: We didn't call the Cuban revolution a revolution of bourgeois democracy. But it could also be named this way.

Chairman: The enemies are: imperialism, feudalism, and comprador capitalists.

Roca: And a part of the bourgeoisie.

Chairman: The bourgeoisie that colluded with imperialism.

Roca: The bourgeoisie that colluded with imperialism and the tyrant.

Chairman: The tyrant is comprador government, a regime standing for imperialism and feudalism, while in the industry sector [the tyrant] is bureaucratic capital.

Roca: In China it is bureaucratic capital. For the sake of tactics, we prefer the Cuban revolution to be called a patriotic democratic revolution, national liberation revolution, or land revolution.

Chairman: Fine, just don't mention the word bourgeoisie.

Roca: [The Cuban revolution] should also be called a progressive revolution, not simply bourgeois revolution, because the vanguard [of the revolution] has never been the bourgeoisie. About putting on the top [Cuba's] relationship with Latin American countries, I have no objection. Yet when it comes to foreign trade, by no means should Latin American countries take the lead. Because, more or less, every Latin American country produces the same stuff. We don't need coffee from Brazil, sugar from Peru, copper from Chile, bananas from Columbia, or coconuts from Costa Rica, for we could produce them all ourselves. What we need is oil from Venezuela, but Venezuelan oil is controlled by the US.

Chairman: Putting trading countries ahead, [I can] agree.

Roca: The Soviet Union purchased 1 million tons of sugar, China purchased 80 thousand tons which is very important, for no one in Latin America bought 80 thousand tons from us.

Chairman: Well said.

Roca: As far as the bourgeoisie's profits are concerned, we agree that they take a certain percentage of profits, but extra profits must go to the State.

Chairman: Our views are for your reference only, and you may weigh and consider the reality when putting them into practice. There is only one problem left, i.e. the 700 million USD in American capital [in Cuba]. If it were all confiscated, the possibility of the [American] intervention would be greater. The Americans are pragmatic. We didn't confiscate their investment in China; instead, we only froze their 400 million USD worth of capital, which are electricity companies, water-supply companies, telephone companies, such as those in Shanghai that they cannot manage now, as we manage them. You have 700 million USD worth of [American] capital while we have only 400 million, which is a practical issue. Were the US a defeated country, like Germany, Italy, or Japan, it would be easy, because they were the defeated. But towards the US, Britain, France, Belgium, and Holland, it had to be different. [We] made ways to elbow them away, meaning that if they were unwilling to leave, they would begin losing money the moment they started to produce things. In the end, they were left no choice but to ask us to take over their factories. This is the practice we followed with the British. We only requisitioned American properties, the ownership problem of which however is still pending.

Deng [Xiaoping]: The problem was in fact solved.

Chairman: Your country is small and there is 700 million USD in American capital. What can you do? To return it?—[you] can't afford it. Suppose [you decide to] confiscate them all; you have no reason for it, [because] it is not a defeated country.

Roca: During the land reform, it doesn't matter if the land belonged to a Cuban, an American, or a Briton, all lands are taken and redistributed. Therefore [the state has already got] a part of the 700 USD million [in] American properties. With regard to American power plants, and telephone companies, we hold down the prices, which makes the telephone companies feel they are running an unprofitable business. A representative has been sent by the government to see if they have really become unprofitable. Ten months since then, no conclusion has been reached as to whether the business is now profitable or not. The Cuban government is constructing power plants which will mount pressure on American power

plants. All land and crossties, used by American-invested railway in Cuba, belong to Cuba, except they are registered under American names. The government has promulgated mining taxes. Some mines reported that they could barely pay the taxes, while not being allowed to suspend production, so they invited government representatives. The US has a huge nickel mine in Cuba but the nickel smelting is conducted in the US. A successful production depends on the cooperation of two sides. [So] Cuba is inviting the Soviet Union to help smelt the nickel, while still cooperating with the US in smelting which won't last though.

Chairman: The land of Cuba is good. Is Cuba a subtropical country?

Roca: South of the Tropic of Cancer, good climate, having sea wind, neither too hot nor too cold, two crops every year.

Chairman: The Americans fear you. They bully the weak and fear the strong.

Roca: At least hate us, if not fear.

Chairman: Because of your resolve, and your strategy.

Roca: China has been a great help for us. Before 1933 we had a very favorable situation. But we made a "leftist" mistake: we wanted to establish a Soviet right away. Not only did the Party make mistakes, but others did too. [All these mistakes] failed the revolution and isolated us.

Chairman: We, too, made mistakes between 1930 and 1934.

Roca: It was between 1933 and 1935 that we made mistakes.

Chairman: Wang Ming was then working in the Comintern. It is no good to draft a program for foreign communist parties. The Comintern imposed their program upon us which made us lose base-areas in the south [of China], caused us to run for 12.5 thousand kilometers, and cost nine-tenths of [our] revolutionary force with only one tenth left. But this is a good thing, for it taught us a lesson.

Roca: We lost one-tenth [of our force]. We made both "leftist" and rightist mistakes.

Chairman: An even better [lesson].

Roca: These mistakes promote the development of the Cuban revolution. In the end, I thank you in the name of the Cuban communist party and the Cuban people.

Chairman: Cheers for your victory and for Castro.

Roca: I shall tell Castro, after I return, that Chairman Mao toasted to him.

Chairman: This is because you got a job done which is of global significance.

[Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.2

Memorandum of the Conversation between Premier Zhou Enlai and Cuban Revolutionary Government Economic Delegation, 18 November 1960

Secret

Time: 18 November 1960, 4:50-7pm

Venue: Fujian Hall, the Great Hall of the People

Present:

Chinese Side: Premier Zhou Enlai, Vice-Premier Chen Yi, Vice-Premier Li Xiannian, Ye Jizhuang, Li Qiang, Lu Xuzhang, Geng Biao, Song Yangchu, Shen Jian, Lin Ping

Cuban Side: Maj. Ernesto Guevara & all members of Cuban Revolutionary Government Economic Delegation

Interpreters: Cai Tongguo, Liu Xiliang

Recorders: Li Shude, Zhang Zai

Premier Zhou (Abbreviated as Premier below): Welcome to you.

Guevara [“abbreviated as Ge” in the original, not abbreviated below]: The wish to visit China, carried for years, is finally realized. Charged with the mission given by our government, we come to discuss some issues. We are very happy that we are the first country in Latin America to establish diplomatic relations with China [on 28 September 1960].

Premier: How is the health of His Excellency, the Premier [Fidel Castro]?

Guevara: He did not feel well, because there was an epidemic in Latin America not long ago.

Premier: Has it become well now?

Guevara: [It] has become good.

Premier: Has every friend come to China for the first time?

(All replied with yes.)

Premier: Welcome to you. Many of our delegations went to Cuba and received a warm welcome from Premier Castro and the Cuban people, for which I thank you again. (Speaking to Guevara) could you please introduce each member [to me]?

(Guevara presented all members of the delegation.)

Premier: [I] heard that [you] could stay in China for two weeks.

Guevara: Two weeks indeed.

Premier: [Then you] should organize your schedule well. [This is] our ambassador to Cuba, Shen Jian. [He] has already been presented, hasn't he? Have you already known all these people (referred to leaders on our side)?

Vice-Premier Li Xiannian: All were presented yesterday.

Premier: What do you want to see?

Guevara: We want to see too many [things], but the time [we have] is just too little. Besides, [we] also need to discuss [issues].

Premier: [You] could do these in parallel: discussing while visiting.

Guevara: Does the schedule contain a plan to visit Guangzhou?

Premier: It should have. [Guangzhou] is also close to a tropical area, similar to yours.

Guevara: Because Chinese descendents in Cuba all come from Guangzhou, [we] are very curious.

Premier: Is your sugarcane used for papermaking?

Guevara: Ramos [Lamosi]⁵⁹ is an expert, specialized in researching this problem.

Premier: Even we haven't fully solved this problem. How much paper can you produce every day?

Guevara: Fifty tons for each day.

Premier: It appears that [you] have solved the problem.

Guevara: Yes, [we] have. We are now conducting research about adding other raw materials so to strengthen the paper.

Premier: Do you add wood pulp?

Ramos: In making newsprint paper, 100 percent raw material is sugarcane. To make blueprinting and writing papers, wood pulp is needed. Now [we] want to add a species of a plant that exists only in Cuba as another raw material.

Premier: You have solved all technological problems.

Ramos: Only the technological problem of making newsprint paper is solved.

Premier: Can you produce the equipment for [a] papermaking factory?

Ramos: Not yet. Machines are all imported.

Premier: You have iron but no coal.

Guevara: Yes.

Premier: Do you produce iron or steel yourself?

Guevara: [We] only produce some.

Premier: How much can [you] produce?

Guevara: We can produce forty thousand tons of iron annually. The Soviet Union is prepared to help us expand it to two hundred thousand tons. Other than that, [we] are setting up equipment [to produce] two hundred thousand tons. This is on our five-year plan.

Premier: What about coal?

Guevara: It still relies on import. We could produce anthracite, but coking coal needs to be imported.

Premier: Where do you import from? Latin America?

Guevara: Now we are importing from socialist countries, because imports from Latin American countries need to be paid for in US dollars.

Premier: So your machinery industry is not quite developed.

Guevara: Not developed at all. We plan to develop industries of automobiles, trucks, farming equipments, tractors, steel & iron, mining, basic chemicals, and agricultural products processing. Regarding the papermaking industry, [we] wish China could help. The textile industry belongs to the light industry in general.

Premier: How about the light industry?

Guevara: We have light industry on a small scale. More equipment is needed.

Premier: Do you sell sugar to Mexico?

Guevara: Mexico is a country that also produces sugar, [and it] now supplies the US.

Premier: In which case you can no longer buy cotton from Mexico.

Guevara: [We can,] as long as we pay in cash, indeed, in US dollars.

Premier: How do you solve the problem of fertilizers?

Guevara: There is now a chemical factory producing fertilizers, which processes domestic raw materials. Apart from it, [we] need to import fertilizers from the Soviet Union.

Premier: Are these ammonia fertilizers?

Guevara: Ammonia and potassic fertilizers can be produced by us. Yet the phosphatic fertilizers—one is calcium superphosphate and the other, triple superphosphate—need to be imported.

Premier: How much to you import annually?

Guevara: The imports of all kinds of fertilizers add up to one hundred thousand tons. In the five-year plan, we are prepared to expand the fertilizer producing capacity, by consolidating existing factories, and [to try to] establish an associated company.

Premier: How much [fertilizers] is it expected to produce?

Guevara: The multi-fertilizer producing company should produce two hundred thousand tons [annually], for our population is merely 6 million. Our ambassador will arrive within the following two days.

Premier: It is said that [he's] already in Moscow.

Guevara: When we left Moscow yesterday, [he] hadn't arrived yet.

Premier: Chairman Liu [Shaoqi], whom you have already met, is still in Moscow, and will be unable to accept the letter of credentials. Vice-Chairman Sun Qingling, i.e. the wife of Sun Zhongshan [Sun Yat-sen], is prepared to accept the letter of credentials from the Ambassador. Do you know her?

Guevara: I know the name.

Premier: She is the wife of Sun Zhongshan. Sun Zhongshan, the pioneer of Chinese democratic revolution, staged the Revolution in 1911, overthrew the feudalist monarchy and founded the Republic. But he failed in the end. Revolution has to go through constant failures before it succeeds. After the October Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party [CCP] was founded. Sun Zhongshan proposed that the Guomindang [GMD] and the Communist Party cooperate with each other. The GMD-CCP cooperation of 1924 advanced revolution, which happened during the period of the First Great Revolution, also known as the New Democratic Revolution. Thanks to the participation of the CCP, Dr. Sun Zhongshan's influence among the people became huge. Although one year and a half after the start of the GMD-CCP cooperation, he died, our present deputy head of the state, the Vice-Chairman, is his wife. At the death of Sun Zhongshan, Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] seized the power. The GMD-CCP cooperation then dissolved. We have fought for 22 years. The GMD suppressed and forced some CCP [members] to work underground. We learned the military way to deal with him. If we did not resist then, the heads of comrades present would have gone. At last, we drove away Jiang Jieshi in 1949. He was backed by the US, just like the tyrant [Fulgencio] Batista, the one you toppled. Given this fact, our anti-imperialist sentiments are the same. We drove away a representative of the US imperialists, you, too, drove away another. Without the military [approach], they wouldn't have left; without the military [approach], both of us wouldn't have been able to meet each other today.

Guevara: We have paid constant attention to learning from the Chinese experience. There were not so many Chinese books in Latin America. But not long ago, [we] came across two volumes of *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong* [*Mao Zedong xuanji*]. We carefully studied them and conducted a discussion. To our surprise, we found that China and Cuba share many things: China is a big country, Cuba is a small one, but both were colonies. There is so much in common.

Premier: This is the result of imperialist oppression. Our villages are extremely poor; cities have been colonized, which is discernible in Beijing, and most conspicuous in Shanghai. Let's talk about detailed issues. Will everyone participate? (Note from recorders: On [the] evening of 17th [of November], Guevara once told our reception staff that after the meeting, only 6 people will stay and join the discussion).

Guevara: Any form will do. If [we] will discuss trade issues only, then trade specialists could stay; if [we] will discuss all sorts of issues, then it will be also all right for everyone to stay. These people all could be trusted, even this journalist, who is not the kind of journalists [as] in Western countries.

Premier: All right. Regarding the meeting of economic cooperation between socialist countries, because we did not join the Council of Eight Countries' Economic Mutual Assistance [COMECON], we were present only as an observer. Yet we do know the content of the meeting.

Guevara: In this meeting, [the eight countries] mainly discussed the price of sugar and the issue of socialist countries purchasing our sugar. Because sugar is our main product, if sugar is not discussed, no deal could be possibly made.

During the meeting, we mentioned conditions that the US gave for purchasing our sugar, which were generous; [we ask] now socialist countries buy sugar at a price of four US cents for one pound, a price that is slightly higher than in the international market. This [proposal] is not tenable from the economic point of view, but we raised it from the political point of view. We have already put forth this idea in the meeting, and also discussed [it] with Chairman Liu Shaoqi. We don't know if there is a need to go through it again.

Premier: No more need to discuss. We all understand.

Guevara: Socialist countries in Eastern Europe will purchase three hundred thousand tons [of sugar], and the Soviet Union

agrees to buy two million and seven hundred thousand tons; both prices are four US cents for each pound. All together there are three million tons. China, according to the agreement, will buy five hundred and fifty thousand tons. But we wish that the total could add up to four million tons.

Premier: On top of the three hundred thousand tons, could socialist countries in Eastern Europe buy an extra amount?

Guevara: They are almost all sugar-exporting countries.

Premier: How much sugar do you produce?

Guevara: Nearly six million. More sugar could be produced, but it is constrained by quota.

No more sugar should be produced. This is the first problem. The second problem is that [we] wish the sugar price could be set at four US cents per pound. The third problem is about purchasing German equipment in complete for a factory, which is raised based on the trade agreement established with the Vice-Minister of trade back in Havana. Also, [there is] the issue of repaying loans. Papermaking machines from China will help us a lot. We are not yet familiar with China's economy, which [we] could have a look at before making decisions. This is the focus of my speech.

The issue of technological aid is less important. Could you send agricultural specialists to Cuba to help us? Besides, we will send some students [to China] to learn Chinese, engineering, sciences and agriculture. Problems in this regard [of technological aid] have been solved in Europe, but [we] also hope that China could help [solve] a part [of the problems].

Premier: Other than papermaking machines, what else [do you] want?

Guevara: We want many things. [We] could let him [pointed to [Chilean economist Albán] Lataste] talk about it.

Lataste: Fertilizer equipment; [equipment] for factories of the automobile industry, such as a tire factory; a bulb factory; after these is equipment for the food processing industry, for example, for canning and agricultural product processing.

Premier: Do [you] have textile equipment?

Guevara: Machines [we have] were bought.

Premier: How many spindles?

Guevara: Two hundred thousand spindles. Besides, there will be another fifteen thousand spindle put into operation next May. The Democratic Germany [i.e., the German Democratic Republic; East Germany] will help us establish fifty thousand spindles.

Premier: Where did the cotton come from?

Guevara: From the US.

Premier: But now it is banned [by the US].

Guevara: The Soviet Union and Egypt could supply.

Premier: How about Pakistan? Could it supply [cotton]?

Guevara: [Pakistan] has no trade relationship with us.

Premier: The questions that [we] just discussed have already been discussed with you by Chairman Liu Shaoqi in Moscow. Cuba's situation was very difficult. [It] was of a colonial economy under complete US control, producing sugar only; the food produced by itself was not much; [its] industry was incompetent. Now new difficulties arrived. The US imperialists imposed an embargo, and perhaps a military blockade. Recently Eisenhower of the US ordered five warships from the reactionary governments of Guatemala and Nicaragua and one aircraft carrier to show off [its] muscle. Standing at the forefront of anti-US-imperialism, you are confronting these difficulties. Being on the same front, the Chinese people have a duty to support you. The problem now is not a question of whether the aid should be given or not, but a question of the possibility [of realizing the aid]. Indeed, any possibility [of giving the aid] should be exploited.

The first problem is the sugar price. Your demand is not unreasonable. On the contrary, it's reasonable. Because the international sugar price was manipulated by imperialism: the US bought your sugar at a slightly higher price, which made it possible [for the US] to sell goods back to you at high prices. Besides, these sugar factories, after all, were invested by them. With one hand, they gave, with the other hand, they took.

Guevara: What they took away was more [than they gave].

Premier: Now you are in charge. You have the power to propose the price. We don't oppose your price of four cents per pound [of sugar]. As long as other socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, agree, we will surely follow suit. Indeed, if he [the Soviet Union] does not approve whereas we do, that won't be good. Because he is the bigger patron,

purchasing two million and seven hundred thousand tons [of sugar]. For us the [price] problem is no problem.

The problem now is the one regarding the quantity of sugar procurement: how much [we] could buy. In terms of China's population, this [one million tons of sugar] is not much, which means less than two kilograms on average for each person, or some one kilogram and half. But this is not the problem. The problem lies in the Chinese people's purchasing power and China's foreign reserve for international trade. Compared to Europe, America, or even some Latin American cities, the living standard of the Chinese people is still low. Meanwhile, the Chinese people are not used to consuming much sugar. For example, you need sugar when drinking tea, we don't. I heard that [personally], you don't have this habit, either. I knew this secret of yours. (The Premier smiled). Of course, habits could be changed too. Consuming sugar also has benefits, such as adding calories. The problem is the foreign reserves. The international market does not accept China's Renminbi. We therefore have to use our foreign reserves.

Guevara: We did not mention foreign currency.

Premier: This is [what we propose]: when we buy your sugar, you should buy goods from us of the same value which will be huge: 1 million tons [of sugar] means 88 million USD, and becomes more than 100 million with freight added.

Guevara: The delivery should be made at Cuban docks, because we don't have the ability to ship sugar to China. We are facing a blockade.

Premier: We are, too, facing a blockade. We share the same fate. We have the same difficulty. Of course, we will buy as we can, and underwrite the transportation expense. Paying freight also requires foreign currency, because we don't have our own ocean-going ships. Let's just temporarily leave the matter aside. With reference to the sugar procurement alone, i.e. 88 million USD, the problem then is whether China is able, or not, to provide the goods you need. I wish you could put forth a list of goods. We will examine the feasibility in practice, only by doing so could we ultimately decide the amount of sugar we buy from you.

Guevara: We are not familiar with China's possibilities, for example, variety, standard, and quality.

Premier: [You] could have a discussion with departments concerning foreign trade. Take a look at samples.

Guevara: The order of goods we need has already been raised back in Havana. We raise the same order of goods to all socialist countries.

Premier: In this case, given that [we] have already received something from you, will you please raise another list? Foreign trade minister, Lu Xuzhang, could discuss it with you. Who will be [in the discussion] on your side?

Guevara: [Alberto] Mora [Becerra], [Ramiro Fernando] Maldonado [Secretary-General, Revolutionary Social Party of Ecuador], Molei [sic]. When will the discussion take place? We would love to participate, if we have time, as observers.

Premier: Tomorrow could be the date of the discussion. This is about the problem of quantity and price of sugar.

The second problem is about the loan and equipment. You said that the Soviet Union has helped [solve] part [of the problem]. As to what China could provide, you are not clear. I suggest that you go to the industrial exhibition tomorrow, to see those suitable small and medium [pieces of] equipment. After the visit, [we] could speak of the feasibility and calculate the amount of money.

Guevara: Agree. When it comes to machines about to be purchased, [they] could not be included to be items paid by loans, instead, be put in the list for trade.

Premier: Those machines in no need of special design could be considered. Who are in charge of this on your part?

Guevara: Lateste, Ramos, Piniela⁶⁰ [sic].

Premier: On our side, Vice-Minister Li Qiang is responsible.

The third is the technological problem. Regarding the demands you raised for technological materials and learning [opportunities] of technological staff, we will help as we can. When the industrial exhibition is visited, [you] could raise detailed demands.

Guevara: Agree.

Premier: Fourth, about transportation problems, which you did not mention but it is a problem that exists.

Guevara: The Soviet Union has promised that transportation problems that other countries cannot solve could be left to them. The Soviet Union will help Romania, Czechoslovakia,

and Bulgaria solve transportation problems. But in the [COMECON] meeting, [the Soviet Union] did not mention China's transportation problem, because China is not in the Council of Eight Countries' Economic Mutual Assistance.

Premier: The transportation of over one million tons [of sugar] is a big task. We are facing a blockade here, and there is also a blockade in your [place]. In the future, there will probably be a total blockade. This year's situation is comparatively good. We have transported to you two hundred thousand tons of sugar. Thirty-one ships have been chartered. From September onwards, cargoes of over twenty ships have been transported. Things have gone relatively well. How are the warehouses of your docks?

Guevara: Do you refer to the number of warehouses, or the condition of equipment?

Premier: [I refer to] the problem of storage.

Guevara: [We] have warehouses. Besides, we are constructing special warehouses for oil and ammonia. If you could sell oil depots, we want [them] too.

Premier: We don't have enough [depots] ourselves, and can't export and provide [you]. Does your oil come from the Soviet Union, or is imported from Romania?

Guevara: All is imported from the Soviet Union.

Premier: Can't Venezuela provide [you]?

Guevara: The oil of Venezuela means the oil of Mobil and Shell, etc.

Premier: The discussion of several detailed problems could stop where it is now. [We] can't reach conclusion today. [Let's] leave them to individuals specialized [in respective fields] who will discuss separately.

I want to talk, again, about our situation. Although China has been liberated for eleven years, its basis [for development] remains very backward. Industrialization was one hundred years later than the West. Out of eleven years [since 1949], the first three years went to recovery, after which [we] spent time on construction. Some accomplishments have been attained, which however become a very few when such a big population is considered. The Chinese people are in desperate hope to get rid of the backward situation and have built up the country at a high speed. Over the last three years, construction has been accelerated. Despite these, [what

we can provide] is not remotely close to what the people need. Both the heavy industry and the light industry could not provide the products needed by the domestic market. Therefore, no matter what happens, [we] have to squeeze out a part of agricultural and mining products and a fraction of industrial products (mainly agricultural and mining products) for exportation, and trade back mechanical equipment. It's impossible for our imports and exports not be influenced by agriculture. Sometimes we have a good harvest, other times a bad harvest. If counted in terms of rubles, the values of our imports and exports reach seven billion for each. The value of the ruble here is not estimated with reference to its exchange rate with the US dollar, but based on other [references]. If counted in terms of US dollars, the value of exports is approximately between two and three billion, the value of imports is [also] two and three billion. Our major trade is the one with the Soviet Union, accounting for 50 percent; nearly 25 percent goes to the trade with other socialist countries; the remaining one quarter goes to the trade with places beyond socialist countries, which does not exceed 600 million.

This is our situation. [The reason why] the trade with the Soviet Union accounts for half [of our international trade] is to repay loans. From 1950 to 1955, we received loans all together of five billion and six hundred million ruble. 60 percent of them is the expense for [purchasing] arms and ammunition to resist the US and aid Korea. Now [we] have to repay [the loans]. Along with interests, we have repaid over two thirds [of loans], with the remaining to be cleared within the next five years. On top of these, there has been a temporary incident: last year we encountered a natural disaster. Our food production this year will shrink by 30 percent of the planned [total]. This will affect a string of agricultural products, and the processing of them, such as tea, cotton, tobacco, and raw materials for industry. Our trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries is unable to be carried out as the original contracts stipulated. [We] will have outstanding balances, reduction in agricultural production, [adverse] impact on industry. It's impossible to recover within one year from natural disasters of two years. Only by 1961 or 1962 could [we] recover. Despite these, as long as [they] are friendly countries, with difficulties bigger than ours, we will always do our best to help. Chairman Liu said you wanted rice. We could help you just by each person having one less bite of rice [*meiren jian yikoufan*]. You raised two figures: one is one hundred and twenty thousand tons of rice, and another, one hundred and eight thousand tons. Which is the figure [you ultimately want]?

(At this moment, Guevara left his seat for some reason. The Premier turned to Cuban deputy foreign minister, [Arnold] Rodriguez [Camps], for a word.)

Premier: Have you and your foreign minister [Raúl] Roa [Garcia] attended the UN General Assembly?

Rodriguez: No, we have two deputy [foreign] ministers: one went with the foreign minister to the UN General Assembly, and I stayed.

Premier: So the foreign minister is now still at the UN.

Rodriguez: Yes, he is still. The struggle in the UN is difficult. It will become easier if China gets into the UN.

Premier: Even if we get in, [we] will only be part of the minority. But gradually the minority will turn into a majority. When you start to lead Latin America, and twenty [Latin American] countries change, the situation will be different.

(At this moment, Guevara returned to his seat, and resumed the conversation with the Premier.)

Mora: The two hundred thousand tons of rice we proposed earlier was based on the calculation of our production capacity and demand. Later on production capacity turned out to be bad, we proposed one hundred and eight thousand tons, which is not an accurate figure, either.

Premier: Your harvest this year is not good.

Guevara: The bad harvest this year is not due to a natural disaster. It is because [we] drove away bad elements. When the technological staff was gone, the production of pesticide dropped, and the production of rice also dropped. Nobody could be blamed for this.

Premier: This is only a temporary problem. No matter whether it's one hundred and twenty thousand tons, or one hundred and eight thousand tons, it's not much against China's population. [We] will be able to provide you [with rice] when everyone squeezes out a half a kilogram [of rice]. I just talked about China's production and trade situation. But as long as [we] could supply you, we will do our best to supply.

Guevara: We know our needs, and [we] also know the efforts made by China, although not quite thoroughly. Our demands are not going to exceed the possibilities. (The translation of

this sentence might not be accurate. There might be an error.) [sic]

Premier: Concrete possibilities should be found.

Guevara: It's estimated that by 1961, we could be self-sufficient in rice, less so in soybeans and maize. We can't produce wheat, which is one of our problems.

Premier: Is rice your staple food?

Guevara: Yes, it's rice. [We] eat it every day.

Premier: Then [you are] the same as we are.

Guevara: Is eating rice China's tradition?

Premier: This mainly refers to the south of China. But in the north, [people] also eat rice, along with wheat and maize. What's the size of Cuba's cultivated arable land?

Guevara: [It] is impossible to estimate. There are no statistics. It's reckoned that 80 percent of territory is arable land.

Premier: Is the figure nation-wide?

Guevara: Yes.

Premier: That is large. I'm afraid that the cultivated arable land is far less, isn't it?

Guevara: [Yes,] it's far less. Some big sugar factories purchase land for sugarcane planting, but there is land, three or four times more [in size than the one for sugarcane planting], not for cultivation but for livestock raising. The US United Fruit Company has seven thousand caballeria [*ka*] land, out of which only two thousand have been cultivated.

(At this moment, Lataste, official of the Industrial Division of Land Reform Commission of Cuba, produced the figure for the number of Cuba's arable land.)

Maj. Lataste said that Cuba has about nine million hectare [of] arable land. The cultivated arable land is about a million hectares.

Premier: That's a lot. On average, everyone has one hectare and a half.

Guevara: True.

Vice-Premier Chen Yi: Then you are the richest country.

Premier: We have only a hectare of arable land for five persons.

Guevara: If counting in terms of Cuba's rural population, everyone has three hectares of arable land.

Premier: The rural area has a population of three million.

Guevara: The rural population accounts for 42 percent of total population.

Premier: Less than three million.

Guevara: [Yes,] a bit less [than three million.]

Premier: [Your cultivation] relies mainly on machines or livestock?

Guevara: Cultivation relies mainly on machines.

Premier: How many tractors?

Guevara: [We have] twenty-three thousand tractors, while we use livestock to grow tobacco.

Premier: [You are using] mixed tractors [sic].

Guevara: 50 percent of the tractors have between thirty and forty horsepower, of various brands.

Premier: Are they mainly US tractors?

Guevara: [Yes, they are] mainly from the US, and then from Britain. Now we buy tractors from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and the Democratic Germany [German Democratic Republic; East Germany—ed.].

Premier: Are there tractor repairing factories?

Guevara: The Soviet Union helped us build a repairing factory.

Premier: You didn't have one in the past?

Guevara: No.

Premier: When components broke, [you] shipped [replacements] from the US.

Guevara: Yes.

Premier: It's entirely a US colonialist solution, the pain that we all suffered. China is politically independent, not entirely economically independent yet. [We] are yet to be self-sufficient in main items. This needs time and this is why [we] said that we need construction and a peaceful international environment. You do understand this thinking of ours? A peaceful environment is good for construction. With ten years, or twenty years, given to us, we will construct the country well, and imperialism will in part dare not bully us. Modern imperialism describes China as militant. You could judge by yourself to see if China is really militant. If [we are] militant, for what did we build this auditorium? It would be gone with one bomb. All newly independent countries invariably need a peaceful environment. When construction is done, imperialism no longer dares to bully [us]. Imperialism refuses to let us develop, and bullies [us], saying that we are militant. Eisenhower recently ordered troops deployed in the Caribbean Sea, saying you were conducting subversive activities against Guatemala and Nicaragua. In fact, they wanted to encourage people to occupy your Binuo Island [Isle of Pines], just as they did to our Taiwan.

Guevara: They are pressuring us, and we bring troubles to them in return.

Premier: [You] gave them very big troubles. You are the vanguard. It's not that you are overthrowing Guatemala and Nicaragua, but that their people should learn from you and people of the world should all learn from you. Fire can't be snuffed out.

Guevara: In fact, we haven't done anything bad. They come to learn voluntarily.

Premier: Certainly [they] should learn. All are facing the oppression of US imperialism. [This situation] is created by the US. Let's call it a day. We will continue the discussion after [your] visits.

Foreign Ministry
19 November 1960

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: 204-00098-02, pp.1-16. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No. 3

Memorandum of Conversation between Mao Zedong and Ernesto "Che" Guevara, 19 November 1960

Time: 4:20 PM – 6:30PM, 19 November, 1960

Venue: Qingzhen Hall in Zhongnanhai

Participants: Cuban Side – Head of Delegation and President of National Development Bank, Major Ernesto Che Guevara, and All Other Members of Delegation; Chinese Side – Zhou Enlai, Li Xiannian, Geng Biao, Shen Jian, Lin Ping.

Interpreters: Cai Tongguo, Liu Xiliang

Recorder: Zhang Zai

Chairman: Cuban Delegation, welcome.

Guevara ["abbreviated as Ge" in the original, not abbreviated here]: It is a great pleasure [for us] to have this opportunity of greeting Chairman Mao [in person]. We have always venerated Chairman Mao in our struggle. We are an official delegation, representing Cuba, but members of our delegation were born in four nations.

Chairman: You are an Argentinean.

Guevara: Born in Argentina.

Chairman: Where else were people in the delegation born?

Guevara: [Ramiro Fernando] Maldonado [Secretary-General, Revolutionary Social Party of Ecuador] is an Ecuadorian, [economist Albán] Lataste a Chilean, I was born in Argentina, all the rest [were] born in Cuba. Although some of us were not born in Cuba, the Cuban people do not resent us by saying we were not born in Cuba. We actually defend the Cuban revolution. Fidel [Castro] represents the will of all Latin Americans.

Chairman: You are internationalists.

Guevara: The internationalists of Latin America.

Chairman: Asian people, African people, and the entire socialist camp support you. Last year you visited a few Asian countries, [didn't you]?

Guevara: A few countries, such as India, Siam [Thailand], Indonesia, Burma, Japan, Pakistan.

Chairman: Except for China, [you] have you been to all major Asian countries.

Guevara: That's why I am now in China.

Chairman: Welcome to you.

Guevara: Our internal situation had yet to stabilize when I left Cuba last year, which was why we dealt carefully with the outside world, unlike now. [Now] the domestic situation is consolidated and we can be firmer.

Chairman: The present international situation is better than last year.

Guevara: The entire nation is united, but every day the imperialists are expecting us to split.

Chairman: Apart from workers and peasants, who else have you united with?

Guevara: Our government represents workers and peasants. Our country still has a petite bourgeoisie which has a friendly relationship and cooperates with us.

Chairman: [Are there] no national bourgeoisie?

Guevara: The national bourgeoisie were basically importers. Their interests were entangled with imperialism and they were against us. [This is why] we destroyed them, both economically and politically.

Chairman: They were comprador bourgeoisie. [They should] not be counted as national bourgeoisie.

Guevara: Some people depended entirely on imperialism. Imperialism gave them capital, technology, patents, and markets. Although they lived in their own country, their interests were entangled with imperialism, for example, sugar traders.

Chairman: Sugar entrepreneurs.

Guevara: They were. Now the sugar business has been nationalized.

Chairman: You have basically expropriated all US capital.

Guevara: Not basically, but all. Perhaps some capital escaped [from expropriation]. But it is not that we do not want [to expropriate it].

Chairman: Did you offer compensation after expropriation?

Guevara: If [a sugar company] purchased over three million tons of sugar from us [before expropriation], [we] would offer a compensation of 5 percent-25 percent [of the value of sugar purchased]. [People] unfamiliar with the situation in Cuba would find it difficult to comprehend the irony embedded in this policy.

Chairman: According to the press, you returned the capital and profits on a 47-caballeria per year basis with an annual interest rate of 1 percent.

Guevara: Only [the companies] that purchased over 3 million tons of sugar would be compensated. No procurement, no compensation. There were two Canadian banks, relatively big. We did not nationalize them, which is consistent with our domestic and foreign policies.

Chairman: To temporarily tolerate the presence of some imperialist companies is strategically acceptable. We too have a few [imperialist companies] here.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Just like the HSBC [Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation], whose presence is just symbolic.

Guevara: These Canadian banks in Cuba are the same as the HSBC here.

Chairman: You [should] unite workers and peasants, namely, the majority.

Guevara: Some people from the bourgeoisie went against us and joined the enemy's camp.

Chairman: Those who go against you are your enemies. You have done a great job in suppressing counter-revolutionaries.

Guevara: Counter-revolutionaries conducted aggressive activities. [For example,] sometimes [they] occupied a few islands, [in which case] they would be annihilated soon afterwards. Nothing to worry about. [We] executed their leader by shooting whenever [we] captured them. Their equipment was parachuted, all from the US.

Chairman: You have also captured several Americans [didn't you?]

Guevara: [They were] tried immediately and executed by shooting.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: The American government protested and you responded.

Chairman: You are firm. Be firm to the end, this is the hope [of the revolution], and imperialism will find itself in greater difficulty. But waver and compromise, and imperialism will find it easier [to deal with you].

Guevara: In the first stage of our revolution, Fidel proposed a way to solve the public housing problem, because the government bears the responsibility to make everyone own a house. We confiscated properties of big house owners and distributed them among the people. Small house owners keep their properties as usual.

Chairman: And then?

Guevara: Now we are in the second stage of the revolution, i.e. to end the phenomenon of one man exploiting another. With close reference to the domestic and international situation, we are working on consolidating our regime: eradicating illiteracy and unemployment (which is in a particularly grave situation), developing the industrial sector, and furthering land reform.

Chairman: Excellent. You have influenced Latin America, and even Asia and Africa. They will be influenced as long as you do well.

Guevara: Particularly Latin America.

Chairman: Latin American petite bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie are afraid of socialism. For a substantial period, you should not rush on the social reform. This approach will do good to win over Latin American small bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie. After victory, Jiang Jieshi's [Chiang Kai-shek's] businesses and those businesses previously owned by Germany, Italy, and Japan but later converted into Jiang's assets were all nationalized, which enabled state-owned capital to account for 80 percent of all industrial capital. Although national bourgeoisie occupied only 20 percent [of all industrial capital], they employed more than 1 million workers and controlled the entire commercial network. It took us nearly 7 years to solve this problem. [We] gave them jobs, voting rights, joint private-and-public management and interest buy-outs, in the hope of solving this problem. This [combined] solution made them satisfied and delivered a relatively good effect abroad. After looking at this solution, although the Asian bourgeoisie were

not entirely happy, they agreed that it was an acceptable way to unite them, and it was fine to use the policy of buy-outs. The problem of the urban handicraft sector and petite bourgeoisie was tackled, likewise, by means of cooperatives.

Guevara: We should borrow experience from other countries, including China and other socialist countries. As for the bourgeoisie, we give them respect, jobs, and money, wishing they do not go abroad. We also give wages to technicians. Traditionally, we do not have a handicraft industry; therefore no problem appears in this regard. We have united the unemployed into cooperatives which in return gave them jobs.

Chairman: The US does not want Cuba to have national bourgeoisie. This is the same case for Japan in Korea and China's Northeast [i.e. Manchuria], and for France in Vietnam. They did not allow local people to build bigger plants.

Guevara: This phenomenon resembles [what happened in] Latin America. In order to destroy feudal forces, imperialism fostered the national bourgeoisie. The national bourgeoisie may have also asked for a higher import tax. But they did not stand for national interests; they were, in fact, colluding with imperialism.

Chairman: I have a question. Is the Brazilian steel industry connected with the US in terms of capital?

Guevara: Major Brazilian metallurgical factories were founded with American capital.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: What's the percentage of American capital? Brazil produces 1.6 million tons of steel [annually].

Guevara: The overall amount of capital for the largest Brazilian factory is not quite clear. But technologically, it entirely depends on the US. Brazil is a big country, yet there is actually no substantial difference between it and other Latin American countries.

Chairman: I have another question. It took more than two years for you from initially landing on Cuba to the moment of ultimate victory. You united peasants and won a victory. Is there any possibility that other Latin American countries could follow this model?

Guevara: This question cannot be answered in one way [*yigai-erlun*]. Indeed, you have more experience and more insightful analysis [than us]. In my opinion, Cuba faced a more difficult setting for revolution than other Latin American countries. There was, however, only one favorable factor: we gained

victory by exploiting the negligence of the imperialists. The imperialists did not concentrate their forces on dealing with us. They thought Fidel would ask for loans after victory and cooperate with them. [By contrast,] initiating revolution in other Latin American countries would face the same danger as Guatemala—the US interfering by dispatching marines.⁶¹

Chairman: Are there any differences [among these Latin American countries] in terms of the domestic situation?

Guevara: Politically, there are [differences]. But socially speaking, [all these countries] fall into only two or three categories. Three countries have [an ongoing] military struggle. They are Paraguay, Nicaragua, and Guatemala.

Chairman: The US now has turned its spear [*duifu*] on Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Guevara: In Columbia and Peru, the possibility for a great people's revolution movement emerges.

Chairman: In Peru, as I said, the majority of the people need land. Also in Columbia.

Guevara: The case of Peru is interesting. It has always had a custom of primitive communism. The Spanish during their reign brought in feudalism and slavery. But primitive communism did not die out due to that. On the contrary, it survives until now. The communist party won the election in Cuzco. This struggle [for communist victory in election] is entwined with racial struggle. Many native Indians live in Peru, but only the white people and the white/Indian mestizos could own land and be landlords.

Chairman: The local people have a population of from 9 million to 10 million, whereas the Spanish population there is measured only at ten thousand.

Guevara: These figures might have been exaggerated. Peru has 12 million people, of which 10 million are native and 2 million are whites.

Chairman: [Peru is] similar to South Africa. South Africa has only 3 million British.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: There are 3 million British, 1 million Dutch, 1 million half-bloods, 8 million Blacks, and half a million Indians. People of the latter two categories live in the most miserable situation of all. Only the white people have voting rights.

Guevara: Peru still has slavery. Land is normally sold with humans.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Like Tibet in the past.

Guevara: In those backward areas, inhabitants do not use money. When it comes to selling, [the seller] puts the goods for sale and copper coins on each side of a balance as to measure them. Notes are not used there.

Chairman: The situation in Columbia is somewhat different [, isn't it]?

Guevara: Columbia has weaker feudalism but faces a far stronger Catholic presence. Landlords and the Catholic Church gang up with the US. The native Indians are poor but not slaves. Guerilla forces used to be present in Columbia, but now they have stopped fighting.

Chairman: Does Cuba have diplomatic relations with other Latin American countries?

Guevara: Several countries colluded with each other and severed their relations with Cuba. These countries are Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala. Columbia, El Salvador, Honduras together declared the Cuban ambassador persona non grata. Brazil withdrew its ambassador, which however was for another reason.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: So together there are 7 countries.

Chairman: In that case, [Cuba] has relations with most countries: 19 [Latin American countries] minus 7 equals 12.

Guevara: [Cuba] has no relations with the first 3 [i.e. Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala]. In the latter 4 countries [Columbia, El Salvador, Honduras and Brazil], there are Cuban chargé d'affaires, though no Cuban ambassador. For Cubans going to Brazil, it is just like going to the other side of the so-called Iron Curtain.

Chairman: What are the natures of the wars in Guatemala and Nicaragua? Are they people's wars?

Guevara: I cannot provide an accurate answer. My impression is that [the war in] Guatemala is [people's war] while [the war in] in Nicaragua is just one of the normal kind. [They are] distant [from Cuba]. I have no idea [of the nature of their wars]. [What I said] is just a subjective answer.

Chairman: Is what happened in Guatemala connected to [Jacobo] Arbenz [Guzman]?

Guevara: I have only seen the declaration of Arbenz on this issue before I left for China. The revolution [there] is perhaps of a popular nature.

Chairman: So Arbenz is now in Cuba?

Guevara: Yes, in Cuba.

Chairman: He has been to China and the Soviet Union. A nice person.

Guevara: We trust him. He made mistakes before, but he is upright, firm, and could be trusted.

(Chairman invited all members of the delegation for dinner, during which they also had the following conversation)

Guevara: Between China and Cuba there are two things almost identical which very much impress me. When you were waging revolution, Jiang Jieshi's attack upon you was [called] encirclement and suppression [*weijiao*], two words that were also used by reactionaries in our place. The strategies [used by them] are the same.

Chairman: When alien entities enter the body, white cells will encircle and suppress them. Jiang Jieshi treated us as bacteria and wanted to destroy us. We've fought against him off and on for 22 years, with two cooperations and two break-ups which naturally prolonged the time. In the first cooperation, we committed [the mistake of following] rightist opportunism. Within the party the rightist group emerged. The result was that Jiang Jieshi purged the party, opposed communism, and suppressed with war, which happened during the Northern Expedition. The second period, from 1924 to 1927, was of nothing but war. We were left with no way, just like Batista not leaving you any way out but killing people. Jiang Jieshi taught us and also, the Chinese people, just like Batista taught you and the Cuban people alike: besides picking up arms and fighting, there is no other way out. We all did not know how to fight, nor did we prepare to fight. The Premier and I are intellectuals; he (referring to Li Xiannian, Vice-Premier) was a worker. But what other choice were [we] left with? He [Jiang Jieshi] wanted to kill.

(Chairman raised a glass to propose a toast to the success of the Cuban people's revolution and the health of all member of the delegation)

Chairman: Once the war broke out, it continued for the following ten years. We built up base-areas, but committed [the mistake of following] rightist opportunism; when the policy leaned excessively to the left, [we] lost the base-area consequently, and were forced to go away, which was the Long March. These errors taught us—basically we made two errors, one rightist and another leftist—and a lesson was learned. When Japan broke into China with a war, we again cooperated with Jiang Jieshi, an episode you didn't have.

Guevara: It's lucky that [we] did not have [it].

Chairman: You didn't have the possibility of cooperating with Batista.

Guevara: Batista had no conflict with the Americans.

Chairman: Jiang Jieshi is the dog of Britain and the US. When Japan invaded [China], Jiang Jieshi did not approve. In the third period, [which lasted for] 8 years [1937-45], [we] cooperated with Jiang Jieshi to fight against Japan. The cooperation was not a good one, [for] Jiang Jieshi represented the comprador capitalist class, being the comprador of Britain and the US. In the fourth period, arriving after Japan was repelled, Jiang Jieshi attacked; we spent one year on defending [against him] and then struck back, which all together cost three years and a half; in 1949, [we] achieved overall success and Jiang Jieshi fled to Taiwan. You don't have Taiwan Island.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: You have Binuo Island [the Isle of Pines]. But before Batista had the time to flee to this island, they captured the Isle of Pines.

Chairman: It's very good to capture it.

Guevara: The possibility of a US attack remains.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: The Americans attempted to attack the Isle of Pines.

Chairman: So American imperialism is our shared enemy, also the shared enemy of people of the world. You all look very young.

Guevara: We hadn't even been born when you started to wage revolution, except him (referred to Maj. Suñol) having already been born. He, 35 years old, is the old man among us.

Chairman: In the past, we struggled in war. Now [we] should struggle in construction.

Suñol: Defend the revolution.

Guevara: China also shares another thing with Cuba. The situation evaluation [produced in] the 1945 CCP party congress reads: some urban people despised villages; our struggle was divided into two parts: one was to conduct guerrilla warfare in mountainous areas and the other was to strike in cities; people who promoted striking held in contempt those who fought guerrilla warfare in mountainous areas. In the end, those who promoted strikes failed.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Very similar.

Chairman: Gaining comfort from squandering forces—this is adventurism. [When they are] unable to pay attention to villages, it is not at all easy for urban people to ally with peasants.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: It dawned on me after I read your article of October 5 (referred to Guevara's note published in the magazine *Verde Olivo* about research on Cuba's revolutionary ideology⁶²). I read the abstract of this article and the issues that you raised. [You] could be regarded as an intellectual.

Guevara: [I'm] yet to reach the stage of being an intellectual.

Chairman: [You have] become an author. I, too, read the abstract of this article, and very much agree with your points. [The article] could possibly influence Latin America.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Have you brought the full text with you?

Guevara: [I] would try to find out.

Chairman: You raised three principles in your articles. People could defeat reactionaries. [They] don't have to wait for all conditions to become matured so as to start revolution. What was the third principle?

Guevara: The third principle is that in Latin America, the main task lies in rural areas.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: It's very important to connect [revolution] with rural areas.

Guevara: We very much stick to this point.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Some Latin American friends did not heed peasants, whereas you very much heeded this point and succeeded. The Chinese revolution is the same: many people did not attach importance to the contribution of peasants, whereas Comrade Mao Zedong very much heeded this point.

Chairman: The enemy taught us, not allowing us to exist in cities. He [Jiang Jieshi] wanted to kill people. What else could you do?

Guevara: A point in Chairman Mao's works is found by Fidel [Castro] to be very important, which I failed to notice at the beginning. That is to treat war prisoners generously: to cure their wounds and send them back. [We] realized this point which helped very much [in our struggle].

Chairman: This is the way to disintegrate enemy troops.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Your article also touched on this point.

Guevara: This [point] was later added. Originally, we took away shoes and clothes from prisoners, because our soldiers did not have [any shoes or clothes]. Yet later Fidel forbade us from doing this.

(Chairman raised his glass and proposed a toast to the health of Fidel).

Guevara: [People] couldn't eat well when waging guerrilla warfare. [We] were also short of spiritual food. [We] couldn't read materials.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: When Chairman Mao fought guerrilla warfare, he often sent people for newspapers.

Chairman: Treat newspapers as information. The enemy's newspapers often leaked enemy's moves, which was one source of information. We began the revolution with several thousand people; [the size of troops] then became over ten thousand, and later grew into three hundred thousand, at which point [we] committed the leftist mistake. After the Long March, three hundred thousand shrank to twenty five thousand. The enemy became less afraid of us. When the Japanese invaded [China], we wanted to cooperate with Jiang Jieshi. He said that we could [cooperate with him], because given [that there were] so few [of us], he did not fear us. The purpose of Jiang Jieshi was to let the Japanese annihilate us. But [he] did not expect us, after we fought with Japan, to grow from twenty thousand to one million and several hundred thousand. When Jiang Jieshi's four million troops, after the Japanese surrendered, began to attack us, we had one mil-

lion troops, and base-areas had a population of one hundred million. Within three and a half years, we defeated Jiang Jieshi. That [warfare over these years] was not guerrilla warfare anymore; that was large-scale warfare. Planes, cannons, tanks, as mentioned in your article, all failed to play any critical role. Back then, Jiang Jieshi had them all, while we had none of them. Only later on [we] captured some cannons.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: In the late period, [we] even captured tanks.

Chairman: The main [type of weaponry we captured] was artillery, which enabled us to set up artillery divisions, artillery brigades, or artillery regiments. They were all US equipment.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: After Beijing was liberated, we had a parade. All were US equipment. Back then, the American hadn't left. The US Consulate General and military attaché also came and watched.

Guevara: In my early time in war, the people I led barely exceeded a company. Once, a tank was captured and we were then filled with extreme joy. But Fidel wanted to take it away. I was unhappy, and agreed to submit only after a bazooka was brought to me for exchange.

Chairman: Although planes fly in the sky every day, they could hardly make any casualties. [People] could dress in camouflage. Green clothes could be used to change one's appearance. You are all wearing uniforms. You were all soldiers.

Guevara: Rodriguez (Deputy Foreign Minister) was not. He was then suffering in jail.

Chairman: You (referring to Rodriguez) look very young.

Rodriguez: 25 years old.

Chairman: You (referring to Mora and Suñol) were soldiers.

Guevara: Mora's father was shot dead in war. Suñol has been wounded three times, in 6 parts [of his body]. I myself have been wounded two times. Rodriguez has been tortured in prison. We had very few men at first. Fidel even fought with his own gun. [We were] only twelve people.

Chairman: Weren't there eighty something people?

Guevara: The size decreased gradually, with only twelve people left in the end.

Chairman: These twelve people are seeds. The temperature in your place is good.

Guevara: [Cuba is] at 22 degrees north.

Chairman: Your lands are also good.

Guevara: All lands could be cultivated. Coconut trees could be planted in areas of sand. But it's difficult to grow crops in the mountains.

Chairman: So [the population of] your country could at least grow to 30 million.

Guevara: Indonesia's Java Island has as many as 50 million [people].

Chairman: You should thank [General Rubén Fulgencio] Batista [y Zaldívar], in the same way we thank Jiang Jieshi. He offered us lessons by killing people.

[Alberto] Mora [Becerra]: We are grateful to Batista also because he drove more people to our side.

Chairman: We have another teacher, which is imperialism. It is our long-term educator. The best teacher is American imperialism. You too have two teachers, Batista and American imperialism. [As far as I know,] Batista is now in the US. Is he thinking of a restoration?

Guevara: Batista's followers are now split into 5 factions, which have together elected 5 presidential candidates. These candidates have views different from each other. Some oppose Batista while others behave like Batista more or less.

Chairman: They all are no match for Batista. How old is Batista?

Guevara: 60 years old.

Chairman: Our Jiang Jieshi is now 74 years old, craving to return to Beijing every day.

Mora: These 5 candidates were all party leaders. People know their names and they too crave to return to Cuba every day.

Guevara: They departed from Central America, four-five days after our victory, and planned to land in Cuba. They said they came to overthrow Batista without being informed that we have already obtained the victory for the revolution.

Chairman: There are many Central American countries. In my opinion, the Dominican Republic is promising, for people there all rally against [Rafael Leonidas] Trujillo [Molina].

Guevara: It is difficult to say. Trujillo is the most mature [*changshu*] dictator in Latin America. The Americans are thinking to get rid of him.

Chairman: The Americans do not like Trujillo?

Guevara: Everybody opposes him, therefore he has to be replaced.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Like [South Vietnamese leader] Ngo Dinh Diem and [South Korean leader] Syngman Rhee.

Chairman: Ngo Dinh Diem is now whining the most [*dafalaosao*].

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: The life of a client is not easy.

Chairman: The Americans now do not like Jiang Jieshi. We become fonder of him. Those who are 100 percent pro-American are worse than Jiang, who is just 99 percent pro-American. He still wants to retain his own influence.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: This is dialectical.

[Commandante Eddy] Suñol: I think you are expecting Jiang Jieshi to come back.

Chairman: As long as he disconnects himself from the US, we shall provide him a place in our government.

Premier [Zhou Enlai]: Better if he could bring back Taiwan along with him.

Chairman: It seems that he is not interested in coming back though.

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: 202-00098-01, pp. 1-14. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.4

Memorandum of Conversation between Vice-Chairman Zhou Enlai, Party Secretary of the Cuban Popular Socialist Party Manuel Luzardo, and Member of National Directory Ernesto Che Guevara, 21 November 1960

(without review of Vice-Chairman Zhou Enlai)
Top Secret

Venue: Xihua Hall of Zhongnanhai
Time: 11:20-2:45 hours
Accompanied by: Li Xiannian, Wu Xiuquan
Interpreter: Cai Tongkuo
Recorder: Zhang Zai

Lu[zardo]: Good health to the Premier.

Zhou: Thanks (introduced comrade Wu Xiuquan).

Lu: He joined our Congress of Representatives.

Zhou: Thank you for your treatment of him.

Lu: We were glad to treat him, only afraid of having not treated well.

Zhou: You were so busy.

Lu: It was our first time treating so many comrades from fraternal parties. Although we did want to treat them well, there many things that [we] didn't do well.

Zhou: [It's all right] as long as the meeting was good.

Lu: This [the meeting] is the major [thing].

Zhou: When did you leave Moscow?

Lu: Four days ago.

Zhou: Comrade [Blas] Roca [Calderio] is still in Havana. How is his health?

Lu: He's getting better. You know that not long ago he felt a bit uncomfortable.

Zhou: [I] know. He's been to China.

Lu: Twice. [His] health is now not bad.

Zhou: [Let's] begin with detailed issues and then move to discussion of the situation. Comrade Guevara is about to leave

[Beijing] for other places. This afternoon there is a People's Congress. Detailed issues have been discussed with comrade Guevara, [but] today [let's] go through them again.

You [referring to Lu] are very concerned about this thing: the first thing we will discuss is about sugar. The price for sugar is four US cents per pound. We will agree to the price that the Soviet Union gave you. You know that we advocate following the Soviet Union. The amount of sugar, i.e. one million tons, is no problem for us. The problem is whether you could buy our goods worth one million [tons of] sugar, because we could only barter with you, which was made clear to you that day. Comrade Li Xiannian told me that this morning [we] could give you a list of our goods [for bartering]. We have proposed a list of goods worth over one hundred million USD for your reference. If after selecting from this list, the value [of goods you picked] is still unable to square with the cost of sugar, i.e. 88 million USD, you will find more industrial products during Comrade Guevara and other comrades' visit to Shanghai, and complement the list by proposing more [items]. We don't know what sort of industrial products you need. Shanghai, in this regard, offers many options. The second thing is about aid. What you mentioned in Moscow is that within the period of the Five Year Plan, between 50 and 100 million USD is needed. The problem now is not the amount. The problem is about what projects you want, including technological materials and equipment installation, such as a paper-making factory and a textile factory. If you cannot come up [with a list of what you need], you could complement it when in Shanghai. Shanghai has more goods. Watching the industrial and transportation exhibition here alone is not enough. When items are fixed, [we] could be able to estimate a value, and then draft an agreement. As to other detailed issues, we will send people to Havana to estimate the scale and speed of construction in accordance with your raw resources and materials. In helping your construction, one principle is to enable factories to produce earlier [in order to] meet demands quickly. In line with this, developing medium and small scale projects is more beneficial. For example, doing a big [project] is less [wise] than dividing it and developing two smaller ones which are adjustable with regards to raw materials and labor, quick and dispersed. The third is technological aid. With regard to technological materials (including industry, transportation and the handicraft industry), technological staff and service men, if you need [them], we could help you, or send people [to Cuba], or you could send people to China to learn, either way will do. Categories and numbers [of them] are up to you to decide. Fourth, transportation, which we have studied. Whether it's shipping sugar [to China] or transporting goods [to Cuba], we charter ships and pay them in foreign currencies; as to freight, two sides calcu-

late [and share]. Based on current situation, it's estimated that [we] will still be able to charter ships. Recently we shipped sugar back; in the future, [we] could have long-term chartering and [more] shuttles could be expected. Comrade Guevara said that Cuba has more than one harbor, and that only one place [for loading and unloading] is not enough, and loading and unloading could be done somewhere else. Fifth, producing some documents. Comrade Li Xiannian and Comrade Guevara could [try] publishing some communiqués or other documents. The delegation could study this with our side. Within the delegation, you (referring to Guevara) could also study with your deputy foreign minister.

Guevara: I want to talk about our opinion of your talk. We agree to each point you mentioned. But I must stress one thing: Cuba is now in an extremely difficult period. We need aid from socialist countries, but don't want ourselves to turn into your heavy burden. China is a big country that has a spirit of helping others. But [we] don't want to create difficulties for you because of [you] helping us. [We] don't want to let this sort of aid become [something] imposed by us upon you. Zhou: It won't be an imposition, but of course, there are difficulties. That day I talked about the problem of disasters, but this is only a temporary phenomenon which could be solved within two years. As long as it is on our list, it means that we could supply you and it is for you to choose. In case that [the value of] selected agricultural and handicraft products is still yet to reach 88 million USD, you could select industrial products and go to Shanghai for selection. Normally, our industrial production can meet the schedule, while some projects can actually produce more than the planned [amount]. The fact that the light industry could not meet the plan is because of the reduction in raw materials. But the heavy industry has overfilled the quota. The reason why we did not, on our initiative, give our opinions when in Moscow is that we're not part of the European Eight Countries' Economic Cooperation Organization [COMECON]; we have no [experience regarding] multilateral payment agreements; we also don't have multilateral trade; our [economic] relationship with every socialist country has always been bilateral. Both of you know this point as Chairman Liu has mentioned it.

Lu: He did mention it.

Guevara: About the problem of [purchasing] complete sets of equipment, I wish that our demands don't disturb your plan. It's all right for Cuba to wait for a while. Cuba's living standard is higher than China's. Although China has the ability [to provide equipment to us], we don't have the right to damage the Chinese people's life. The technical staff of our

delegation are all representatives of the capitalist class, filled with capitalist thoughts. Please be patient when you are discussing with them.

Zhou: Our plan won't be disturbed in terms of the industry. Medium or small products, be it from light industry, heavy industry, or handicraft industry, [we] will produce based on raw materials that you have (instead of importing raw materials), which is beneficial for the development of one country's national economy, helpful to you, but of no [adverse] influence on us. We know that you gained independence not long ago, and [now] need technical experts whose performance we understand. Giving you technical materials is in accordance with socialist countries' practice, i.e. no patent rights and you only pay the cost of printing and paper. When [our] technical staff go to your place, [they] should receive the same treatment as your workers have, instead of excessive [treatment]. These are our rules. Their families at home will be looked after by us. They eat what your technical staff eat, and live where your technical staff live. [The treatment] should not be the same as our cultural delegation had who went to your place and received very good treatment. Were this practice to continue, you couldn't afford [it]. Regarding commodity prices, as long as there are prices [for the same commodities] in international markets, we follow international market prices; if there are none of these prices, the two sides should discuss and decide.

Guevara: About [purchasing] complete sets of equipment, one point has to be made clear: Cuba's situation differs from China's. Cuban workers' wages are very high, which is due to being close to the US and therefore influenced by the US and also because workers struggled against US factory owners for higher wages. We prefer factories that are big and produce multiple goods, which is different from China. I wish that at least one complete [replica] of a Chinese company could be taken and put into production within a relatively short period, as a model.

Zhou: What we supply is a complete solution. [We] will be responsible for technical materials, design, equipment, installation, and transportation.

Guevara: [I] want to be clearer about the problem of transportation. Does each side share half of foreign currency costs?

Zhou: It depends on your foreign reserves. If purchasing sugar, we pay the freight and price you received is FOB [Free On Board]; when it comes to the procurement of our goods, if freight has to be taken into account, [we] could discuss

[the sharing percentage]. In one word, [we] will not create difficulties for you.

Guevara: Then my mission is completed.

Lu: I very much want to point out that his (referring to Guevara's) mission is the same as [my] mission.

Zhou: Have you seen the recent interfering activities of the US in the Caribbean Sea? [How is] the situation? [sic; the original is unclear. Furthermore, it's followed by an abrupt change of topic—trans.]

Lu: When I was about to come here, [I] just thought that it would be great if there could be a discussion between one party member and another party member.

Zhou: Correct.

Lu: The delegation is [in the name] of the Cuban government, which I didn't participate in. But I came to work this thing out with Comrade Guevara. Last time I told Chairman Liu: in front of the Chinese Communist Party, I could describe Comrade Guevara as a party member and also the member of our national directory, which I also said back in Moscow. This is off the record.

Zhou: We [also] keep it off record, which is why in the public speech I addressed Guevara as Your Excellency Major. (Everybody laughed.)

Lu: The approach we're adopting is the one of seeking close cooperation between us—Comrade Guevara and the Party Secretary (referring to Lu himself)—and you—comrades of the Chinese [Communist] Party. You also understand that many things could be done in this way, but couldn't be spoken of as such.

Zhou: Yes, this approach is good, also beneficial to obtain the solidarity of the Latin American people.

Lu: This is to say: this talk is a discussion between the delegation of the Cuban [Communist] Party and the representatives of the Chinese [Communist] Party. Comrade Roca came this summer, and [he] has already explained the nature and problems of the Cuban revolution. I don't want to discuss the details any more. I think you have understood.

Zhou: Yes, today the *People's Daily* publishes the article written by Comrade Guevara for the Verde Olivio magazine on 5 October.

Lu: Of course, we could take this opportunity to talk about other things. The Cuban revolution was deepened recently: US banks have now all been nationalized.

Zhou: [I] know [it].

Lu: The remaining banks that haven't been nationalized are only Canadian banks.

Zhou: Two [banks].

Lu: This is why Canada does not follow the US, and impose an embargo. We should exploit the conflict between them.

Zhou: We should exploit all conflicts that could be exploited.

Lu: The experience of the Chinese [Communist] Party is useful in this regard.

Zhou: Comrade Mao Zedong has told Comrade Guevara that in Shanghai we still have British banks.

Lu: US sugar factories and companies together worth over one billion USD have all been nationalized.

Now the US has only a Guantanamo Base in Cuba. On top of other work, land reform and cooperatives [are almost finished]. We could agree with what Fidel Castro said that the first period of revolution is completed.

Zhou: This is a democratic revolutionary period, [to be precise,] an anti-imperialist, nationalist democratic revolutionary period.

Lu: True, but we do not always say so. Just like what Fidel Castro said, our agenda is, as the Havana Declaration proposed, to constrain the phenomenon of one person exploiting another, which explains the way ahead for the development of revolution. Between you and me, [I] could speak of it: The Cuban regime is one based on the alliance between workers and peasants. We didn't publically say so. When we spoke to the public, [we] talked about four classes, which are classes of workers, peasants, small capitalists, and big capitalists. The major leadership goes to the workers' with citizens and radical small capitalists participating. Revolution is striding forward. I didn't expect it to be so quick; at that moment,

I wanted to make the process of nationalization slower. But facing the aggression of US imperialism and resistance of the big capitalist class (although their power is weak), we were left with no other choice. Naturally, it's impossible not to provoke deep hostility from the US imperialists. Not only because what Cuba confiscated was US capital worth nearly one billion USD, it's also because the Cuban revolution made an example for all other Latin American countries, which [became more significant] given Cuba's proximity to the US, only 90 miles. This revolution is profound, constantly developing and deepening. Therefore, the US imperialists use all sorts of measures to defeat the Cuban revolution. You know that Cuba [had] an oil problem. Thanks to Soviet help, we thwarted the US attack on this front. The US has effectively stopped buying Cuban sugar, but the Soviet Union helped us, buying lots of sugar. Because of this, [we] also thwarted this attack. We're continuously thwarting all forms of aggression against us. Under this circumstance, the US is prepared to deal with us with military interference. Although they [the Americans] have many plans, the Latin American people support us, and people of the world, principally people of socialist countries, support us. Comrade [Nikita] Khrushchev issued a warning: whoever attacks Cuba, [the Soviet Union] will prepare to support us. Now the US implements an overall economic blockade of us, while [it] does not abandon the idea of military attack. It's training Cuban war criminals and mercenaries in Guatemala and other Central American countries, and preparing [them] to launch an attack upon Cuba when conditions become mature, which makes such attacks look as if [they are] not from the US.

Zhou: How many people are being trained overseas?

Lu: It's estimated that there are 5,000 persons. But it's really hard to calculate. Rich people all do not want to die.

The US capitalist class even uses Spanish Falangists and German Fascists to create all sorts of provocations. [It] relies on Guatemala in particular which has submitted to the US. The US also wants to put Guatemala and other Latin American countries in conflict with Cuba. [It] could then convene a meeting of the Organization of American States [OAS] and rule that Cuba is aggressive. As Guatemala is impotent in terms of combating aggression, in accordance with the verdict of the Organization of American States, it's up to the US to provide troops to wage a small-scale war in the Caribbean Sea; meanwhile, the US will maintain the economic blockade, throttling revolution economically as well as militarily. The war activities of the US in the Caribbean Sea are shamelessly open: [it] wants to occupy islands near the island of Cuba, for example, the Isle of Pines, create a puppet

regime on these islands, like a small Taiwan, establish diplomatic relations with the puppet regime, give them weapons, and [send war] ships to besiege the island of Cuba. Thus, we can imagine the danger Cuba is facing. Now Cuba is developing its internal strength. The Cuban people are invincible, and they fully support the revolutionary government. The insurgent troops are the army of workers and peasants, becoming better day by day and having been consolidated and developed day after day. It's a brand new army, being guerrillas in the past but now regular troops. He (referring to Guevara) is one of the men in charge. Nominally, he is the head of the National Bank [of Cuba]; he's, in fact, one of the men in charge of military troops. We have organized revolutionary militias, rank-and-file militias, with a total between 250 thousand and 300 thousand militias of workers, peasants, and students. They are militarily vigilant, being trained, and divided into regiments, battalions, and companies. Now there are schools specialized in training militias. Insurgents, militias, and people are all highly mobilized. They have good morale, ready to protect the revolution and the homeland. We have weapons, relatively good weapons; we are learning to use weapons. Our weakness is the absence of an air force. [We] are short of pilots. More efforts should be made in this regard. Popular organizations have been increasingly united: youth organizations have merged into one; women's organizations have merged into one.

Zhou: How many people does the youth organization have?

Lu: Over 100 thousand. This figure could hardly be described as accurate though. Because organizations have just merged, there are communists, people of the 26th of July Movement, and organizations of other natures. The leadership of this [youth] organization is good. Women's organizations have also merged. The trade union at first encountered these difficulties [caused by miscellaneous sources of members], but now has become better and more consolidated.

Zhou: How many workers?

Lu: If one takes into account agricultural workers who joined the trade union, there are over one million. Within the trade union, there are *muhachi* [sic] people (referring to traitors among workers [or workers helping factory owners]) and opportunists. Peasants' organizations have also merged. Now [we] are adopting a critical measure: merging the 26th of July Movement and the Party into a united political organization. This is a major activity. [We] don't want a rush for quick results; [we] will do so when conditions are mature.

Zhou: That's correct.

Lu: The important thing is that the 26th of July Movement is consistent with us in terms of strategy and aggression resistance. Both sides agree that the new organization should be founded on a Marxist-Leninist base. Its organizational principle should also be a Marxist-Leninist principle. Every element within us has all been actively mobilized. You know that the representative assembly of our party proposed four slogans: strengthen the unity of the nation, strengthen national defense and protect revolution, improve production, raise awareness.

Zhou: [Those are] very good.

Lu: These four slogans are anti-imperialist slogans. We know that the development of revolution has received support from people within the country, from people of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, from socialist countries, among which [support] from the Soviet Union and China have been the most important. We're confident to say that although we have difficulties, [such as] economic blockade, military provocation, being only 90 miles away from the US, the Cuban revolution will not fail, in the same way that the Soviet Union, China, and the entire socialist camp will not fail. Therefore, aid from socialist countries is particularly important, and the meeting today of our two parties is significant. Honestly speaking, helping the Cuban revolution develop is an investment in the global socialist movement; it's a political investment. We destroyed one link of the imperialist chain in Latin America, and hope that other links will break and fall too.

Zhou: [That's] right.

Lu: We're very grateful for the aid of China.

Zhou: [We] should do so. This is our responsibility.

Lu: We are also grateful for the [Chinese] efforts [to provide] aid in the future. Comrade Guevara understands your difficulties in construction. But as a comrade, [he] requested that you meet our wishes as fully as you can, to prevent Cuba's living standard from dropping. As Comrade Guevara said, this living standard has reached a certain degree. The aim of the Cuban revolution is not to reduce but to increase it. We need support from socialist countries, mainly [in the form of] buying sugar. [We] wish that socialist countries could buy 4 million tons, at no less than 4 [US] cents per pound. If China could buy 1 million tons, it would be of tremendous

help. Comrade Zhou Enlai's suggestions could be considered, while our needs should also be pondered. Both sides should be taken into account. [We] wish that by exploiting this opportunity, [we] strengthen the fraternal contact between [our] two parties.

Zhou: [I] Agree.

Lu: [Confronting the fact of] the people of Cuba and the people of China establishing a relationship, imperialism and monopoly capital are not happy. They want to break down this relationship. But other Latin American countries, in the near future, will consider establishing relations with China. When Fidel Castro announced in the Havana meeting that [Cuba would] sever diplomatic relationship with Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] and establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, people were in a buoyant spirit.

Zhou: Thank you for your brave and just act.

Lu: I'm indebted to the Chinese people.

Zhou: Why?

Lu: Cuba established contact with Jiang Jieshi.

Zhou: That was so in the past. It's not your responsibility.

Lu: Driving away imperialism and tyranny opens up the door for establishing relations with [the People's Republic of] China.

Zhou: Correct.

Lu: The friendship between the people of two countries is growing day by day.

Zhou: Correct.

Lu: The friendship between two parties, too, is developing, on which Comrade Roca has been insisting. His proposal was correct and [we] should follow [it].

Zhou: Thanks for explaining these problems. Indeed, the Cuban people cracked a gap [in the wall] of the US backyard. The fact that [the Cuban people are] standing in the front-line of [the] anti-US [struggle] is what the Chinese people as well as people of the world admire the most. We believe that once there appears one gap, other gaps will follow. Once one link breaks off, there will be other links following. Once the

Latin American people wake up, [they] will sleep no more. While we pin down US military forces around Taiwan, you pin down even larger [US troops]. Therefore we have a duty to support you. You don't have to thank [us]. We have the duty to help. People of two countries stand together on the path of struggling and oppose the same enemy. Now our two countries have diplomatic relations and [our] two parties have a closer tie, which are all happy things. Latin American people respect you; the entire world, principally the people of socialist countries, respects you. These are all good aspects, favorable aspects. The US imperialists refuse to submit [to these developments]. It does what it can to intervene. We keep a close eye on the two approaches you mentioned. One is to provoke the conflict between you and Central American countries, and then let the Organization of American States make further efforts to intervene. Another is to operate a puppet regime on the Isle of Pines. Not only does Eisenhower once again attempt this, the newly elected President [John F.] Kennedy also speaks of waging a partial war. Around him, diplomatic experts, papers, and other mass mediums are all selling [the idea of] limited warfare, forest [or "brush"] fire warfare. The *New York Times* recently published five articles; they advocate that limiting the war to a region, in which case the Soviet Union will be unable to use missiles. This is a very important point. Because using missiles means [starting] a world war, which is identical to what Khrushchev lays out in the five points. First, the two countries [the US and the Soviet Union] both reduce military expenditure; second, [the two countries] do not allow nuclear weapons to destroy the two countries' civilizations; [the two countries] do not let the atmospheres above the two countries [become] polluted [with radioactive fallout]; fourth, both agree not to put nuclear weapons in the hands of more countries, which [specifically] include China and France, and what's worth attention is that West Germany and Japan are not mentioned; fifth, the two countries could promote the exchange of culture, science, and trade. In the past trade [as a term] was not raised, but he [this time] adds trade. Khrushchev said that missiles are symbolic, and [the Soviet Union] does not want war. Kennedy captures this sentence; he [chooses] not to wage a big war, or a missile war, instead, he plots a partial war and non-nuclear war. In the way you said, Guatemala and Nicaragua [first] create provocations, and the US then steps out, intervening and reconciling. Or [the US] founds a puppet regime on the Island of Pines, the possibility of which should be looked into. In other words, the US imperialists won't stand on the frontline. Cuban comrades should study this situation. [If] the US stays in the dark in the shadows, how should the Soviet Union respond? How should China respond? How should socialist

countries and Latin American people respond? You are close to the US, and it's easy for the US to exploit certain Latin American countries and operate puppet regimes. [When] the US uses Latin American countries to fight Latin American countries, [they] could say that Europeans and Asians should mind their own business. [You] need to think of your response if this situation emerged. Has Premier Castro considered it yet? Has the Popular Socialist Party considered it yet?

Lu: These are precisely problems we are thinking of. Fidel Castro recently said that the first priority should be given to strengthening the internal power. [We should] make ourselves capable of repulsing any attack, and therefore make it unnecessary for the Soviet Union to aid [us] with missiles. Because just as what Comrade Zhou Enlai said, that would start a world war and entail huge sacrifice. No fantasy should be given to the Soviet missiles. Because the foundation of protecting Cuba should [not] be placed on a world war. Therefore, [we] should consolidate internally as much as you can and seek aid from other countries. The fact that you tell me about Kennedy's words makes me very happy. I only knew the basic content, while what you said is detailed. In his campaign Kennedy indicates that he is an implacable foe of the Cuban revolution.

Zhou: Very correct.

Lu: Kennedy stresses only one aspect of Khrushchev's speech.

Zhou: Of course, he is an imperialist.

Lu: Khrushchev said that the aid of missiles is symbolic, but the US attacks are not symbolic. Kennedy only wants one side of Khrushchev's speech, we want both sides. You have the duty to continue exposing imperialism, seeking the support of Latin American people. It's difficult for the US to obtain agreement [among Latin American countries]. You are versed in these problems. Your analysis must be more incisive.

Zhou: You are more familiar with Latin American problems.

Lu: You know the UN voting results of the proposal concerning Cuba. Some Latin American countries abstained, including Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador, Panama, [and the] Dominica[n Republic]. It's not entirely a walk in the park [*yifanfengshun*] for the US to realize its goal within the Organization of American States. We will carefully study the problems raised by Comrade Zhou Enlai. As we have discussed above, we should, as much as we can, expose the US

and exploit the conflict between the US and Latin American countries.

Zhou: Correct.

Lu: Doing so is good for thwarting US plans.

Zhou: Does Comrade Guevara have his own opinion? You are a strategist.

Lu: And also a statesman.

Guevara: As Comrade Lu has explained, Cuba's situation is unique. The US does not know in practice what to do and how to attack. Waging a large-scale [war] will provoke a world war. We have two duties: one is to protect the lives of Cuban people, and another is to defend world peace.

Zhou: Correct.

Guevara: We know the degree of danger.

Zhou: This is the [present] situation. As you two have said, [you] should expose the US, exploit conflicts, mobilize nationals, seek [external] aid. All these are correct. As [a communist] comrade, with experience in lasting warfare, [I] provide one point for your reference: based on our party's experience, one should prepare for the bad scenario while striving for the good one. The direction of our efforts should be to strive for the best, but [we] should [also] prepare [for] the worst. Assuming that we have those preparations done, it will be difficult for the US to intervene. This is good. We'll strive [for the best] and try to push for [it]. But in case two conspiracies were to be realized, what [should we] do then? [We] have to prepare in advance. Assuming that the blockade starts off, ships of the Soviet Union and other countries could not reach Cuba, the US declares regional war, Cuba is then bound to stand up and resist and Castro will lead, which we firmly believe. But [we] need time: to defeat the US in the war, to push for changes in Latin America, and to push people of the world [to respond to] the US military intervention, all need time and preparation. Perhaps you are already prepared.

Guevara: What preparation are you referring to?

Zhou: Could weapons, manpower, militias be expanded? Weapons need to be added and stored. You should yourself build weapons-making and repairing factories. In particular, there should be preparations for explosives, food, [and also] solid food and gasoline that could be stored over a long period

of time. [With them] one could still resist with supplies when external aid is cut off. [We] don't know if you are prepared.

Guevara: We agree to strive for the best, but [should] prepare for any possible situation. We've made achievements internally in developing [our] economy, cooperatives, and increasing production.

Zhou: I know.

Lu: We are overcoming difficulties, promoting cooperatives, and accelerating plans in this regard. As you said, [we] must think of what people will eat once that kind of situation [occurs]. Enemies will not rest, nor should we rest. [We] believe that Fidel Castro will fight to the end. He is a genuine revolutionary, firm, competent, and wise. His position is becoming closer to ours every day. Sometimes we can't even distinguish who is who. As to the problem of weapons, his (referring to Guevara's) will be more correct.

Guevara: Preparation is being made in every aspect. First, preparing for the enemy's raid. [The US plans] to finish us within two days, before Soviet aid arrives. The enemy could send paratroopers to Havana. They are familiar with Havana. Although Havana is not yet fully prepared, it's under preparation. Without relying on reinforcement from others, when paratroopers land, [we] could vanquish them immediately. We have made preparation for long-term resistance both in mountainous and urban areas. As the Premier said, we are storing weapons and explosives, building hospitals, transportation lines, telephone [facilities], modern war forts, training peasants who will wage guerrilla warfare. We have learned a lot from the Korean War. Some preparation work is not going fast, but it's heading in this direction. Could you send experts to our mountainous areas to establish explosive factories?

Zhou: We could. How about raw materials?

Guevara: [We] have glycerin and sulfur, concluded a contract with Czechoslovakia buying a cartridge-making factory which has a big effect, [products] of which could be used for multiple purposes, bombing attacking targets, conglomerated units, beachheads, and targets in the way of advancing. [We] should prepare for the absence of foreign aid, and for a lasting [war].

Lu: This is how it is.

Zhou: [You] should think [these issues] over. We have fought against the US in Korea. When you visit Korea, you could even talk to them, to see what secret defensive works could be constructed in mountainous areas. It's these defensive works that the Chinese Volunteer Army and Korean People's Army relied on. The US spent several ten thousand tons of explosives, [only to find] that they couldn't take even one mountain top. With these defensive works, he [the US] was on the hill-top, while we were within the hill. They couldn't capture [our positions] in any way. Because of this, the US imperialists are unhappy with the Koreans and the Chinese the most. Now it's the Cubans whom the US becomes unhappy with.

Lu: We have expanded your force [of communism].

Zhou: Everything should be considered on a long-term basis. It's better for the war not to come. In case it comes, peasants are capable of bearing suffering. [You] should educate workers, employees, and intellectuals in advance, your article (referred to Guevara's article) mentioned this point. [You] are striving for their life becoming better; but in case it turns bitter, [you are striving] for national independence, [for the sake of which they] must also bear [hardships]. Fidel, Raúl [Castro], and Comrade Guevara are all strong persons. [You] should turn your strong will into the one of all Cuban people. This problem has been discussed by Comrade [Deng] Xiaoping and Comrade Roca. Chairman has also discussed with him for one day.

(The Premier invited Comrade Lu and Comrade Guevara for lunch, during which [they] also had the following conversation.)

Zhou: [You] should visit several communes outside Beijing and compare them.

Guevara: [We] have a somewhat different situation. We can't have large-scale collective employment. Our salaries are high. But the combination of agriculture and industry could be learned.

Zhou: How high are the salaries?

Guevara: 120 US dollars per month.

Zhou: Do peasants have a low living standard?

Guevara: Peasants' lives are improving gradually. Peasant workers earn 2.65 US dollars per day with 25 days a month.

Lu: [They] don't have work all year around. If [we] count by year, [peasants'] salaries are low.

Zhou: What is the unemployment?

Guevara: 300 thousand, and [another] 300 thousand seasonal unemployed people. The complete estimate is approximately over 500 thousand. This is not an accurate figure.

Zhou: Does it include urban and rural unemployed people?

Guevara: All are included. After the revolution 100 thousand people have found jobs.

Zhou: Has land in rural areas all been [re-]distributed?

Guevara: No. [People] with over 30 caballeria [*ka*] should hand out extra land. People with less 30 caballeria don't have to. But there are people who colluded with US reactionaries. We then gave them [a quota of] 20 caballeria or even less.

Zhou: Don't owners of land as such still need to hire agricultural workers?

Guevara: Yes.

Zhou: Are there restrictions?

Guevara: No.

Zhou: Do landlords have machines?

Guevara: They do.

Zhou: How many of the 4 million hectares of arable land you mentioned in our last conversation (referring to the meeting with Guevara on the 18th [of November]) could be distributed among peasants?

Guevara: Half [of the 4 million hectares].

Zhou: Peasants will be relieved once [they] are given land certificates.

Guevara: We are promoting [the idea of] joining cooperatives, in which case land becomes useless.

Zhou: According to China's experience, [you] should also not take back land certificates.

Guevara: Compared to Chinese peasants, Cuban peasants have a different perception towards land. Cuban peasants, for the time being, are not in a hurry to have their own land. They're willing to hand them over.

Zhou: What's the political attitude of landlords?

Guevara: [People] with more land hold a bad attitude. [People] with some 30 caballeria are relatively better.

Zhou: When you were fighting guerrilla warfare, did landlords and the urban capitalist class help you or empathize with you?

Guevara: If they had, they would have made a mistake.

Zhou: Why? Was the help not good?

Guevara: [Consider that they] help us and [later] we take away their lands.

Zhou: Have you given them jobs and political treatment?

Guevara: We let them do the [old] jobs, but with lower salaries.

Zhou: Have they been given political treatment?

Lu: They will be given [political treatment] if [they] don't oppose the revolution.

Zhou: Do [they] have voting rights?

Guevara: [They] have, but whom could they vote for?

Zhou: China's experience: a few capitalists, who supported or sympathized with us, have [not only been given] voting rights, we also select them at different levels of government as representatives, although very few [of them get selected]. Do you have a congress?

Guevara: No, [we] mainly [have a] people's congress. [We] don't have time for elections.

Zhou: Yes, it's [now] an era of revolution. Other than the small capitalist class, are there also private companies?

Lu: [We] have small ones.

Zhou: Do [you] have medium-size ones for the time being?

Lu: We have [companies] of several dozen people.

Guevara: Certain small factories, while not having big investments, have over one hundred [employees], such as sewing factories.

Zhou: Are these people supporting the revolutionary government?

Guevara: [They] are [behaving] better than before.

Zhou: Your wholesale business is in the charge of the government. Do you leave the retail business to small businessmen?

Guevara: It's the case in cities. In villages, most of the retail business is also in the hands of the government.

Zhou: Via state-run stores?

Guevara: They're called People's Stores.

Zhou: Is it because most commodities are imported [that] the government places tight control [over them]?

Guevara: Domestic commodities are also all purchased by the government and sold.

Zhou: Their raw materials are up to themselves to buy or for the government to distribute?

Guevara: [As to] domestic [raw materials], [they] buy themselves; [as to] foreign [raw materials], [they] buy via the government.

Zhou: You've managed foreign trade well. Our first thing after the revolution was to manage foreign trade, by doing these [we] cut off the connection with imperialism. Do you have enough intellectuals?

Guevara: Not enough. Their thoughts are backward. Every day there are people among them going to the US.

Zhou: Are there many among college students receiving US education?

Guevara: The class background of college student is not good. Most are the offspring of the rich people.

Zhou: Our [college students] weren't good either in the early period after liberation [of 1949]. They changed later.

Guevara: Like in Berlin of East Germany, we have people here every day running for foreign countries.

Zhou: Do [you] have enough military academies?

Guevara: Trainers were old, very bad. Recently a group of militia officers graduated.

Zhou: What's the [attitude] of old intellectuals towards you?

Guevara: [They are] very annoying.

Lu: This kind of people could only write stuff that imperialism likes. They wrote about Cuban history only in the hope to create a counterfeit Cuban history. The geography books they wrote are correct though.

Guevara: Our director of the Land Reform Committee has written a book about the geography of Cuba. These people became unhappy. They burned his book. They consider the land reform as a considerable sin.

Lu: Thank you very much for your opinions and questions you raised today.

Zhou: For your reference.

Lu: China's revolutionary experience is worth learning.

Zhou: We share similarities. But each country has its own features. Foreign countries' experience could only be seen as a reference. [You] must [act] according to the detailed situation.

Lu: This [learning from others] is the only way to find the correct explanation.

Guevara: The book written by [Israel] Epstein [covering the period] from the Opium War to China's liberation, recounts the thirty year period of the Chinese Communist Party. [He] spoke of the necessary integration with peasants and [the idea of] armed revolution against armed counterrevolution, which fits entirely, that is, word by word, the situation of Cuba.

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.204-00098-03, pp. 1-19. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.5

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, Memorandum of Conversation between China's Ambassador to Cuba, Shen Jian, and Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro, 11 February 1961

Secret

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Time: 4 PM

Venue: Chinese Embassy in Cuba

(For the matter of [realizing] Prime Minister Zhou Enlai's [idea of] inviting Castro to visit China, Ambassador Shen asked the Protocol Department to arrange a visit for Castro. Prime Minister Castro, however, insisted on coming to see the Ambassador and [subsequently] had close to a one-hour long discussion with Ambassador Shen. After the talk, Ambassador Shen, Attaché Huang [Wenyou], and Attaché Fang, accompanied by Prime Minister Castro, visited several training classes held by the Cuban government.)

Castro: [I'm sorry that] I was busy and therefore unable to attend the reception dinner you held for the Chinese delegation (referring to the delegation led by Deputy Commissioner Guo Moruo [a prominent Chinese author as well as government official]).

Shen: I knew you were busy. In accordance with the protocol, I should visit you first.

Castro: We are friends and don't need those diplomatic protocols.

Shen: Now I'm presenting to you a letter from Prime Minister Zhou Enlai who invites you to visit China. The Chinese government and Chinese people all look forward to your visit to our country. This is a copy, and the original will arrive soon.

Castro: (Reading the transcript of the invitation) Thank you very much. I should find a separate occasion to reply. I have [always] hoped to know the People's Republic of China. The Cubans who have been to China all think that China is wonderful. Will those Chinese agricultural experts whom I requested arrive soon?

Shen: Six agricultural experts will soon depart. Two rice transplanters will also arrive before long.

Castro: When will the Chinese magazines arrive in Cuba according to [our] agreement?

Shen: It's mainly a transportation problem, because Cuba is distant from China. If [Cuba] has special needs, [we] could try making technological improvement [sic]. If there are magazines in particular you want to read, please tell me the names of the books, and I could try using other quicker ways to transport them to Cuba.

Castro: I'm very interested in the Chinese magazines, in particular, on planting and the achievements of China in this regard, etc. I once read these in a magazine given by Bei people [sic]. I'm [also] interested in China's Spanish publications.

Shen: Our Spanish publications are not many, because our translation staff is very few.

Castro: A few days ago, I received a book on modern Chinese history. Now I'm reading it.

Shen: There is one thing I want to tell Maj. Raúl Castro. As I'm seeing you today, I should take this opportunity to tell you about it. Regarding Cuba sending 125 persons to China to learn piloting, our country has everything ready now and wishes to know when the Cuban personnel will depart [for China].

Castro: We are still selecting people, picking only the best people, young and with good eyesight. We are making selections in a pool of several hundred people, which makes [the selection process] slow. It's reckoned that [we] are half way through now. Among those selected, some people are from the Volunteering Youth Guards [*zhiyuan qingnian dui*] who have received rigorous tests. We want to send the best selected people to learn piloting and let the rest [of the selected] learn mechanics. We plan to send people who have already been on the short list to China. [We're] trying to send the first group this month. What route to China will these people take?

Shen: We have no plane to Cuba, therefore it has to be solved by Cuba.

Castro: Then [they] should take the way via Prague.

Shen: We have no problem [with this]. We have always given our full support to the Cuban revolution. We would love to do our best to hand technologies to Cuban friends.

Castro: I thank China for all it has done in the past for us.

Shen: This is what we should have done. The Cuban revolution is a great support to China and also a big encouragement to the entire world.

Castro: In a few years, Latin America will have big changes and things that occurred in China will also take place here. Recently we faced many problems. Every time Latin America had a revolution, they then blamed Cuba. We're facing all sorts of aggression from imperialism. Some Latin American governments, when having an internal crisis, will invade Cuba at any time. We must be prepared at every minute. In a period between the next six and eight years, we will often take up arms.

Shen: This is very important. There is a lot in common between the Cuban revolution and the Chinese revolution, accordingly, there will be similarities in problems we encounter and face. What you said is exactly our situation in Asia. China will be blamed for every revolution that happens in an Asian country. We don't care about these kinds of accusations. [After all,] people will wage revolution [sooner or later]. It's a good thing for people to rise and wage revolution.

Castro: For Cuba, [US President John F.] Kennedy's speech is extremely aggressive. He has attacked Cuba five times within twenty days [since becoming president on 20 January]. This is good because he exposes the US opposition to Cuba and proves that the US is the one that provokes, not Cuba. The mask of Kennedy's policies is being torn apart day by day. They [the Americans] have great [intrinsic] conflict: on one hand, they want to earn sympathy from Latin America; on the other hand, his [Kennedy's] position towards Cuba stands in the way of achieving the above-mentioned aim. The US could not solve [its] problems in Latin America by economic means, [because] primarily, it is not willing, and secondly, it can't. Kennedy talked a lot about private investment, whereas Latin America has no interests at all in it. His 500 million US dollars couldn't even solve one Latin American country's problems. Kennedy chose the worst way. In fact, if he wants to play shabby tricks, he should have eased relations with Cuba. [On the contrary], he uses money to raise Cuban counter-revolutionaries. [Likewise,] we could also give help to political exiles of each country.

Shen: The US gave six billion US dollars to Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek], but didn't save him from his destiny.

Castro: At that time, the US was richer than it is now. Back then socialism hadn't acquired global power as it has now, therefore [was] unable to help [international socialist] revolutions.

Shen: The Cuban revolution is a significant event in the world. When Maj. [Ernesto "Che"] Guevara was in China [in November 1960], we were arguing, partially, about a problem: when discussing [the content of the] communiqué, Maj. Guevara's opinion was to describe [China's support] as China's unselfish aid to Cuba, we didn't agree and [believed] it should be written down as mutual aid instead of unselfish aid. Later we brought this issue to Prime Minister Zhou Enlai. Prime Minister Zhou Enlai also advocated that it should be not written as unselfish aid, but mutual aid.

Castro: Yes, both our countries share things of common interest. Both China and Cuba are firmly opposing imperialism. When imperialism hasn't disappeared, China, Cuba, and Latin America all are at the risk of war. The entire world has the same interests in the disappearance of imperialism.

Shen: The success of the Cuban revolution is a great strike against the US imperialists. The US imperialists have even occupied our country's Taiwan. Across the Taiwan Strait, we're also facing the military threat from the US imperialists. The Cuban revolution's success drags the US' feet on the other side of the world, which is support for us. Our aid to Cuba is very limited. Our economic foundation was in bad shape. From the success of [the Chinese] revolution, it's been only 11 years. We will possibly give greater help than before. Cuba is revolutionary, and China is revolutionary, too. China's success of revolution was several years earlier than Cuba's, therefore [we] have the duty to support the Cuban revolution. With the success of revolution being several years later than China's, Cuba also has the right to demand aid from countries that succeeded earlier. This is internationalism.

Castro: When revolution happens to another Latin American country, we will also give it aid. I'm speaking in full confidence that there will be anti-imperialist revolution in Latin America which could be stopped by no one. Because we are the first country that achieved the success [of revolution], all sins are thrown up at us. But we are happy. Between [the scenario of] Latin America having revolutions with Cuba facing attack and [the scenario of] Cuba being in peaceful environment yet with no revolution in Latin American, we choose the former. We're facing the encirclement of hostile governments. Pirate planes often fly in our territorial space; we don't know where they come from, perhaps from Guatemala, Nicaragua,

Miami, or any airfield in a country that participates in this encirclement. We're encircled by enemies' bases.

Shen: I and my Cuban friends once came to a topic: Is the US more afraid of Cuba, or is Cuba more afraid of the US? Of course, Cuba is also afraid of the US, because the US is as yet a powerful imperialist. But your revolution is advancing to victory and you are happy. And the success and development of the Cuban revolution is bound to push the development of revolution in other Latin American countries. More Latin American countries will march to victory, which means imperialism increasingly approaching its death. Eisenhower and Kennedy both see the Cuba problem as one of their headaches. Judging from the fact that Kennedy [rhetorically] attacked Cuba five times after he assumed office, he is more afraid of Cuba. The US will create some difficulties for Cuba, but the Cuban revolution will receive support from the world. The rapid development of the Cuban revolution accelerates the arrival of the doomsday of imperialism.

Castro: In modern history, the first strike upon the US imperialists was delivered by China.

Shen: Then the second strike to the US imperialists was [from] Cuba.

Castro: (speaking with a smile and gesticulating) our strike is very small but with strength. More powerful strikes will [fall] upon the US imperialists and lead to its downfall.

Shen: Cuba's revolutionary success also solves a problem in some people's mind. Some people thought that China succeeded only because China is distant from the US, with a vast territory and a huge population. A wrong theory they held is that one country, small and close to the US, will be unable to attain revolutionary success. [But] Cuba's revolution succeeded, and this absurd theory then perished.

Castro: This is how I think: if it was 15 or 20 years ago, that sort of argument might have been possible. At that time, the socialist world was not as powerful as it is now. Without the support of the socialist world, the US imperialists might have created severe difficulties, and Cuba's revolutionary success would have become much harder. If it was in the [19]30s, I believe that the US [would have] already directly sent their troops. The US now is being forced against a wall. I'm certain that revolution will develop in Latin America.

Shen: The presence of the socialist world amounts to the support of Cuba, which is very important. But mainly you have to rely on your own force. You landed with over 80 people;

then about a dozen people moved to the mountains and fought guerrilla war; in the end, [you] enlarged your army, toppled a reactionary government, [and] kept developing until now. This [achievement] is mainly attributed to your own strength. Without one's own efforts and strength, others' support won't have an effect.

Castro: There would have been no Cuban revolution in the absence of the Soviet revolution and China's revolution. We have expended tremendous effort, which was in line with the law of historical development. Our tasks are just part of the development of history. Imperialism was also working hard, but [their efforts] were made in the opposite direction of the law of historical development. There are many kinds of efforts, but only those that share the same direction with historical development will find their way to victory.

Shen: This explains why the US imperialists, having squandered so much money and built so many bases, are still unable to save themselves from downfall.

Castro: Socialism doesn't need foreign bases.

Shen: Chairman Mao used to describe bases established by the US across the planet as nooses. The US imperialists put their head into the noose, one end of which has been handed to the people of each country. Taiwan is a noose. Guantanamo is a noose, too. When people of the world all rise to oppose imperialism and tighten these nooses together, the US imperialists will be dead.

Castro: This moment is approaching. About the problem of the Guantanamo base, I'm looking forward to asking, one by one, Britain, Italy, West Germany, Spain, and other countries and governments that have connections to US bases, in the UN General Assembly: does the US have the right to occupy another country's territory? If they say [the US] does, then it will amount to selling their own sovereignty which leads to internal conflicts.

Shen: In the Sino-American Ambassadorial Meeting in Warsaw—of course, as you know, we conduct tit-for-tat struggle with the US in parallel to the Sino-American meeting—our ambassador raised the difficult question to the US representatives on the spot: is Taiwan Chinese territory or US territory? The US dare not say that Taiwan was theirs. So they only said that they have a diplomatic relationship with Jiang Jieshi. We said that Jiang Jieshi had already been overthrown.

Castro: [You] could also stress: [Is] Jiang Jieshi Chinese or American? The US finds their way into all others' houses across the world. I'm looking forward to meeting Chairman Mao in person. I admire him very much. To meet him will be my honor. We also hope that he could visit which would be a big event in the world.

Shen: Chairman Mao speaks highly of Cuba's revolution. I'm sure that Chairman Mao will be happy to meet you. If you could have the chance to visit China, it will be a great hope to the party and government officials of our country and the Chinese people.

Castro: When our country's defense power becomes well established, improved and unlikely to have major problems, I'll visit China.

(The following is about the three yachts that the Cuban government prepared for each friendly country.)

Castro: China's art delegation really impressed me. I could never forget. The Chinese art delegation has left behind in Cuba the admiration [of the Cuban people].

Shen: You mentioned that you wished us to send a circus, which we're preparing and it will come when it is ready.

Castro: The art delegation has made a great contribution to the friendship and fraternity of the two countries. I wish I could have the opportunity to see China's arts. Our country's people all agree that the performance of the Chinese art delegation was marvelous.

Shen: In line with Chairman Mao's instructions, China's arts should serve workers, peasants, and soldiers, and should not be the stuff of the ivory tower. Watching [the performance] of China's arts not only gives pleasure to people, it also boosts people's revolutionary spirit. In this sense, China's arts are also a form of education.

Castro: The Chinese art delegation once performed for the children in the Maersitela Mountain area [sic]. That was the first time for these peasant's children to watch an artist performance. We are also prepared to raise three thousand dancing, music, and drama teachers, let them work in those village schools across the country and deliver arts to people, making the life of our peasants and workers happier and more joyful. We established music schools at the houses of rich people who fled to foreign countries. We wish that you could visit these places. We also bring the off-spring of Xiyenaru's [sic]

peasants to Havana, and let them receive education in rich people's houses. Even the children of US millionaires would envy [them]!

Shen: I'm looking forward to visiting them, but don't know where and whom I should contact.

Castro: If you want, we could visit them right now.

Shen: Good.

[Source: *Memorandum of the Conversation between China's Ambassador to Cuba, Shen Jian, and Cuban Prime Minister [Fidel] Castro, Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00612-01, pp.4-11. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.*]



Document No.6

Memorandum of Chairman Mao Zedong & Cuban Cultural Delegation, 19 April 1961

(Not Reviewed by Chairman Mao)

19 April 1961

Top Secret

Should be destroyed when finished

Date: 19 April 1961

Venue: Nanchang [Capital of Jiangxi Province]

Companions: Shao Shiping [first governor of Jiangxi Province], Chu Tunan [President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries], Chen Zhongjing [senior official from Foreign Cultural Liaison Department of State Council]

Interpreter: Wang Huaizu

Recorder: Zhang Aizhu

Head of the Cuban Cultural Delegation, Education Minister, Armando Hart Dávalos: It's been our great pleasure to meet you in person.

Chairman Mao: How are you?

Hart: Very good.

Chairman Mao: We are two friendly countries. We help each other, and support each other. We share the same goal of

struggle: opposing imperialism and constructing socialism. There is only one imperialism, US imperialism. It oppresses not only us, but it oppresses you as well. It's the largest one among imperialist [countries]. It oppresses people of the world. It also controls second-tier and third-tier imperialist [countries] to oppress people of the world [with it]. Among countries that are not imperialist, there are ones that support and minister to imperialism, such as Batista and Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek]. It has their running dogs in all countries, which is why we also oppose their running dogs. Imperialism could not survive without their running dogs. There are big running dogs and small running dogs. Batista is a big running dog, while there also exist small running dogs. Not only are big plantation owners running dogs, some capitalists are also running dogs. In the cultural realm, imperialism also has running dogs. We should strive for [the support of] intellectuals of the old society. If we don't strive for them, we could no longer continue our enterprise. [Without them,] there will be no teachers in schools, no professors in colleges, no technological experts, no artists, no people singing, no painters, no football players, no bands, and no engineers. Therefore we must strive for these old intellectuals. But old intellectuals have old world perspectives. As a result, we should reform them. We should not adopt the same way as how we deal with Batista'ists and Jiang Jieshi'ists to treat old intellectuals. We should not reform them by forced labor. [Rather,] we should talk to them. On one hand, [we] talk to them, and on the other hand, [we] let them work. We'd better not rush. [Because] if we rush, they will defy us.

How long have you been here?

Hart: I have arrived quite a few days ago.

Chairman Mao: How's your health?

Hart: Very good.

Chairman Mao: You're all people who deal with cultural and educational affairs?

Hart: We are all dealing with cultural and educational affairs. Some [of us] are university professors.

Chairman Mao: (Counting the number of people.) You have ten people. Are you all coming to China for the first time?

Hart: Yes, it's been our first time to visit China.

Chairman Mao: I've seen many Cuban friends.

Hart: Your reception impressed many Cubans. A lot of people know you. You're quite famous among us.

Chairman Mao: Many people recognize me, but very few are familiar with me. We were co-workers.

Hart: Co-workers in a philosophical sense. We're happy and proud of this. We're genuinely happy to have been able to learn from the experiences you have accumulated.

Chairman Mao: I said we were co-workers, because I was a teacher, too.

Hart: We know well that you are a great Chinese educator.

Chairman Mao: I just taught for four or five years, then imperialism refused to let me teach and forced us, educated people, to march on the road of revolution. I also studied in the capitalist class' school, before which I even taught in *sishu* [old-style private schools popular in rural areas]! [In *sishu*,] I studied feudalist philosophies, virtues and principles such as those of Confucius. Later [I] went to a capitalist normal [teachers] school, studying capitalist philosophies, at which time, [I] had no idea of the existence of Marxist-Leninist thought, [and was] also not prepared to conduct revolution, or to organize the communist party. Later the general situation of society oppressed us, feudalism and capitalism pushed us, [we] then rose to the stage of the revolution and started the drama of the revolution.

I think you also came to touch revolution in the same way: first, eradicated the feudalist and capitalist world perspective; [later] in the course of revolution, you achieved self-remolding.

You know China's revolution took a long time. From 1921 when the Chinese Communist Party was founded to 1949, it took 28 years. Out of 28 years, 22 years were in war. It is not easy to re-mold intellectuals. It is not easy to transform the old world perspective into the proletarian world perspective. [Friedrich] Engels said that to be an educator one has to receive education first. If there are no old intellectuals, there would be no intellectuals, no professors, no teachers, no journalists, most importantly, no engineers. So we must go and unite with them. China, the Soviet Union, and your country's experiences all prove this point. But fraternity is just one part of policy. The other part is to re-mold them. Because they are old intellectuals, [they] have to be re-molded. Speaking of re-molding, it's mainly about transforming old world perspective into workers' world perspective. This task should not be

rushed. [It] should be done by persuasion, instead of coercive means. Only by making them observe by themselves in the course of struggle and letting them become uncomfortable with the old [world perspective] and feel that it's useless, will [re-molding succeed]. In our country, we accept Marxism and Leninism. But relying on Marxism-Leninism is not enough. Reading Marxist-Leninist books alone does not mean accepting Marxism-Leninism. It has to be married to one country's own peculiar circumstances.

Hart: As to this point, it has been universal around the world. We, Cuba, are the same. We knew that Cuba is under the feet of imperialism, and understand how to struggle under these circumstances. This is why our revolution came to success. Our revolution implemented this theory [of marrying Marxism-Leninism to a country's peculiar circumstances].

Chairman Mao: It's dogmatism if one is not marrying Marxism-Leninism into one's own country's peculiar circumstances.

Hart: That violates dialectics.

Chairman Mao: But if [one] stresses only one's country's own circumstances and experience and does not accept Marxism-Leninism, [that becomes] right-leaning opportunism. We had right-leaning opportunism, Chen Duxiu [first party secretary of the Chinese Communist Party], and also left-leaning dogmatism. Our party has committed both kinds of mistakes in the course of the revolution. Making mistakes such as these is unavoidable for countries like ours. The failure of the grand revolution of 1927 derived from Chen Duxiu's right-leaning opportunist mistake. Do you know the Long March of 1935? It was of 25,000 li [12,500 km].

Hart: (and all other people on the scene) all of us on the scene all know about this Long March.

Chairman Mao: We made a 25,000-li Long March. Why did [we] take such a long route? This is the result of Jiang Jieshi who made us do so. Why did Jiang Jieshi have us walk? It's because we committed a right-leaning opportunist mistake. We had to go. We should not blame Jiang Jieshi; on the contrary, we should blame ourselves. Prior to 1927, we cooperated with Jiang Jieshi. Due to [our] lack of experience, we didn't expect that Jiang Jieshi would betray us. They [the Guomindang] knocked us down with a sudden strike. After that, we obtained experience and came to know why [they] could knock us down. It's because they had guns in their hands. We also had two hands, so we also looked for guns.

But we didn't have [guns back then]. As a result, we began to try capturing guns. You have experience in this regard.

Hart: The Cuban insurgents' weapons were mostly captured [from Batista's forces].

Chairman Mao: The US gave [them] to Batista, and Batista handed [them] to you.

Hart: This was also the case recently. Out of the rifles that the US dropped by parachute to counter-revolutionaries, many have been captured by us. No doubt, most weapons that the US imperialists will drop by parachute to Cuban counter-revolutionaries are also going to find their way into our hands.

Chairman Mao: Do you have recent news of [the US attempt to] bomb Cuba?²⁶³

Hart: Yes. Rumors go that enemies would take the Isle of Pines [renamed the Isle of Youth ("Isle de a Juventud") in 1978]. The fact that the US imperialists want to occupy the Isle of Pines is because [the US] wants to establish a puppet government and separate it from Cuba, which is a common practice of [the US] dealing with other countries. It's just like [what the US did to] China's Taiwan. Its polices in [other parts of] the world are the same.

Chairman Mao: How large is the Isle of Pines?

Hart: The entire Cuban Island is over 114,000 square km. The Isle of Pines is 3,500 square km.

Chairman Mao: Are there residents?

Hart: There are [residents], especially because it has an important prison.

Chairman Mao: Can you swap? Move [the prison] to the homeland, and convert [the island] into a base.

Hart: We are doing this. Our military presence in the Isle of Pines is strong. Enemies wanted to capture [it], but failed.

Chairman Mao: That is a relief. This is different from our Taiwan. Your Isle of Pines still has time for fortification, [the success of which] will depend on your preparation.

Hart: We believe in the solidarity of the Cuban people, and are also moved by the aid offered by each [socialist] country. Our people very much appreciate Prime Minister Zhou Enlai's statement.

Chairman Mao: Yes, I knew that, although I haven't seen it (referring to the telegram sent by Prime Minister Zhou Enlai to Castro).

Hart: We understand that in major Chinese cities, such as Beijing, there were grand demonstrations [in support of Cuba].

Chairman Mao: There should be. We hope that places in which a revolutionary party is present should all support Cuba. I only came to know yesterday, when I just arrived here from Changsha [the capital of Hunan Province], that your departure has been put ahead of schedule. This is why I invited you to come and have a meeting. Do you still plan to visit the Soviet Union?

Hart: We are very interested in the visit to China, whereas Cuba wants us to go back earlier, and to visit the Soviet Union on our way back. Projects left in the Soviet Union also need to be accelerated. But before we leave, we are determined to sign the cultural implementation plan of 1961.

Chairman Mao: Good. We approve this plan. Come back again in the future when you have opportunities.

Hart: I wish to present you these friends present.

Chairman Mao: Please.

(The head of the delegation presented people one by one.)

Chairman Mao asked Aerdeluosi [sic]: Will [you] go back to Spain? You should definitely knock down the Falange.

Aerdeluosi: I'm not prepared to go back yet. The Falange will be toppled. I'll go back when it's down.

Chairman Mao asked Kaerbendiai [sic]: Your job is to supervise cultural activities.

Kaerbendiai: Yes. I have always wanted to buy your works, and always fail to find them in France. [But now] I find them in China.

Chairman Mao: For your reference.

Kaerbendiai: These are this century's greatest reference [works].

Hart pointed at Aerqiulaier [sic] and said: He is on the Intellectuals' Committee and the University Reform Committee. Cuba is having a discussion about the tasks with regard to intellectuals. Aerqiulaier is very much one of those who defend your opinion.

Chairman Mao: In this venue of ours, the Cubans are in advantage where the Chinese are in disadvantage.

Hart: In terms of quality [of interlocutors], you are far ahead of us.

Chairman Mao: That's not entirely correct. Among us there is a big intellectual, that is, Governor Shao [Shiping], who has gone to college [attending Beijing Normal University in 1923]. (Then [Mao turned to and] asked Comrade Chu Tunan and Comrade Chen Zhongjing, after which he continued.) They are all big intellectuals. They [are people] who [could have] taught me. They began to teach in middle school after finishing college studies. They could teach me. I could teach in primary school. Our country also has intellectuals, several million intellectuals.

Hart: We're also trying to enlarge the group of intellectuals. One good way is to expand primary education, to raise intellectuals of the future. Based on a series of educational reforms, [they] will be well raised and grow.

Chairman Mao: There is one thing you should bear in mind to which we paid not enough attention. Out of people graduating from primary school, [you] should not let an excessive part go to middle school; [similarly,] out of those graduating from middle school, [you] should not let an excessive part go to college. If all go to middle school and college, instead of into farming, there will be a shortage in the supply of labor. As our machines are few, we badly need labor now. This is a point you may be unable to feel now, but will in the future.

Hart: Cuba has begun to feel a shortage of labor in the sugarcane harvest season. [But] this problem will [genuinely] arrive only several years later, for we still have unemployment. We're prepared to eliminate unemployment, which relies on industrial development. In Czechoslovakia and Poland, we saw that industrial development hinges on educational development.

Chairman Mao: [Education] should develop proportionally. Primary education is education of the foundation. In its popularization process, [you] should also look into the problem of labor distribution. How many universities do you have?

Hart: Three. Our university organizations are different from those here. Our every university includes various colleges, such as industries and humanities. We are reforming our universities. Because the present teaching system is only ministering to imperialism and therefore, should have a thorough reform. This is our combat with intellectuals. In Cuba, had intellectuals openly adopted positions the same as the enemies', we would do what you said.

Chairman Mao: Among Chinese intellectuals, there are also people who disagree with the Chinese revolution, or are counter-revolutionary. They are not friends, but enemies. To them the policy I just mentioned becomes inapplicable. They should be treated the same as enemies. As to those openly opposing revolution, put them in jail. This is what you did, isn't it?

Hart: Yes. [Some] Cuban intellectuals created obstacles to revolution. Some fled from Cuba. Some have now come back. There people are not working in the realm of education. They're freelancers.

Chairman Mao: Are they agents?

Hart: Some are [agents].

Chairman Mao: What did they come back for? To work [for socialism] or to sabotage?

Hart: Some came back because [they] have a difficult time abroad. As to [people] who are doing harmless jobs such as being doctors, we let them live on.

Chairman Mao: Correct management.

Hart: There are a couple of gifts [we] would like to offer you, as our souvenirs to you. The gifts are not at all glamorous, but they embody our best wishes. (Among the gifts there were copper figurine and national flags.)

Chairman Mao: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Hart: This painting [portrays] a significant event in our history: the proclamation of the Havana Statement by our people.

Chairman Mao: Were there one million people?

Hart: Yes. In that assembly, Prime Minister Castro asked the mass if they were willing to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. People demonstrated

their approval by all raising their hands and hailing. Now our relationship becomes closer.

Chairman Mao: True.

([All] took photographs.)

Hart: Thanks very much for receiving us and [your] treatment.

Chairman Mao: [I] wish Cuba success in the struggle. Greet the Cuban leader, Prime Minister Castro [for me].

Hart: Thanks.

(Chairman Mao walked down the steps, saw foreign guests into their cars, and waved farewell.)

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00586-01, pp.1-10. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.7

Memorandum of Conversation between Mao Zedong and Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos, 28 September 1961 (Excerpts)

Time: 9:30PM -11 PM, 28 September 1961

Venue: Qingzhen Hall in Zhongnanhai

Present: Cuban Side: Head of the Delegation of Representatives of Integrated Revolutionary Organization Maj. Sanchez, Ambassador to China Pino Santos, Ambassador to Mexico [Jose Antonio] Portuono, Ambassador to Czechoslovakia Raúl Roa Kouri.

Chinese Side: Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Chen Yi, Luo Ruiqing, Zeng Yongquan, Shen Jian, Li Qixin

Interpreter: Chen Yongyi

Recorder: Chen Guang, Liu Xiliang

[...] [sic]

Mao: The Brazilian vice-president [João Goulart] told me, the US demanded an intervention in Cuba by the Organization of American States who, however, failed to carry it out. He raised an example. Between Brazil and Argentina there is Paraguay. The Paraguayan government made tremendous

efforts in organizing an anti-Cuban demonstration, only to assemble ten thousand people in the end. However, the next day, 100 thousand people voluntarily walked in the streets and demonstrated in support of Cuba. This is the story from the Brazilian vice-president.

Do you know this?

Dorticos: We were informed, more or less.

Mao: Vice-president Goulart has now become the president of Brazil.

Dorticos: Brazil has undergone a serious crisis which left the people's movement in a grave situation.

Mao: What is the situation now?

Dorticos: As far as we know, Brazil has seized victory from the struggle against imperialism and counter-revolutionaries. Yet this victory is inconclusive. People should stay vigilant.

Zhou Enlai: [...] [sic] The heads of the army, the navy, and the air force of Brazil were all replaced. It appears [that Goulart employed a] step-by-step strategy.

Mao: Ah! It seems that Goulart does have a trick up his sleeve. Very good tactics.

Dorticos: We believe that after the counter-revolutionary forces within the Brazilian military made certain gains, they had to retreat in the face of the resistance of the Brazilian people and the Latin American people's vocal support of the Brazilian people.

Mao: What about the congress?

Zhou Enlai: The Brazilian congress appears to be on Goulart's side.

Mao: The situation favors you. Brazil is such a big country, and then there is Mexico. Perhaps there are other countries friendly to you?

Dorticos: The imperialist conspiracy to isolate us has failed, but the imperialists do not give up.

Mao: [They will try to] isolate you again. To them, the struggle hasn't stopped. Neither has it to us.

Dorticos: This is a long-term struggle.

[...] [sic]

Dorticos: Cuba is inexperienced.

Mao: You have not had as much time. But you have more intellectuals, which means that you would perhaps achieve more in a few years.

Dorticos: We have the aid of the socialist camp, and could draw on the lessons of the socialist countries. But we are in dire need of intellectuals, professors, architects, and other professionals.

On top of it, another headache for us is that many doctors, architects, intellectuals—some had the daylight scared out of them by imperialists and others surrendered to the imperialist bribery—abandon our country. In Cuba, in fact, there are no national bourgeoisie intellectuals who could be counted upon now.

The national bourgeoisie is closely connected to imperialism. Because of the direct imperialist pressure, our efforts to win over the national bourgeoisie were compromised.

Mao: [Are there] people from the national bourgeoisie staying in Cuba?

Dorticos: Yes. But they did not participate in the management work, nor did they play any coordinating roles. The national bourgeoisie in exile are now dwelling on an illusion, hoping American imperialists would sooner or later restore their control of Cuba. At the same time, the imperialists are sustaining this illusion, indeed, for their own sake.

Mao: Therefore you will face an ever more difficult situation in construction. You too need to train your own intellectuals. Dorticos: This is indeed one of the immediate goals on which we are putting tremendous efforts. Because we understand that without a sufficient number of intellectuals, no progress will be achieved in socialist construction.

In our land reform, particularly in its early stage, officers among the insurgents took the full responsibility. They were firm adherents of the revolution, but none of them know agriculture.

Mao: The same case here: [our officers are] capable of conducting revolution but incapable of construction.

Dorticos: They [officers among insurgents] are skilled in confiscating properties from imperialists and landlords, but just incompetent in construction. They need to be replaced. We are training agricultural technicians and cadres for people's farms and cooperatives. Besides, Cuba is a country of mono-agriculture. We are short of experts to diversify our agriculture.

Mao: A new phenomenon. It is entirely a new question.

Dorticos: We are specialized in raising sugarcane, and also tobacco, of very high quality.

Mao: Take your time in learning other things. You will master them. Setbacks in the process of learning are expected. But setbacks could also be good. They are like setbacks in your revolution. No setbacks, no successes. If it comes to the topic of setbacks in our revolution, there are plenty. Experience comes from nowhere but setbacks. Construction is also like that. No success arrives in this world without the companion of setbacks. But the general trend is that we are advancing and the enemy is falling behind. Isn't [Fulgencio] Batista an obvious case of falling behind? Isn't Jiang Jieshi too? All things in the world share the same logic of development: that which is new advances, that which is reactionary in general falls behind.

I have met many Cuban friends with whom the conversation was a pleasure for me. They were vigorous. Indeed, they were just the people you mentioned in the land reform. Although they do not know how to construct now, they will one day. Enthusiasm is the first must-have. It just cannot be done without enthusiasm. With enthusiasm, people always find their way to understand things that they don't know now. Why shouldn't one master the economic construction when one could master the revolution? I just don't believe it. But with 12 years passed we still could not master it, but you only have had two years.

Dorticos: Two years plus a few months. Sometimes, economic construction was interrupted by foreign intervention, and meanwhile we also had to learn to defend ourselves. Revolutionary government did not know how to run a country at the very beginning!

Mao: True! How to run a country, how to be a president, how to be an ambassador, and how to be a labor minister – we did not have any experience! Once you do it, you get the experience.

Dorticos: During revolution, people, highly self-motivated and acting at their best, proved to be fast learners.

[...] [sic]

Mao: Fraternal countries shall be less diplomatic and more sincere [towards each other].

Dorticos: Good point.

Chen Yi: We too actually don't know how to practice diplomacy.

Dorticos: We don't know either.

Mao: (smiling) No idea of diplomacy. One ought to be diplomatic towards Western countries, for they don't speak to you sincerely.

Dorticos: Our intercourse with the People's Republic of China is comradely.

Mao: Therefore, Comrade Shen Jian shall train the staff of our embassy to act friendly towards Cuba.

Dorticos: Our relationship with Ambassador [Shen] resembles the one between comrades or friends. This could be guaranteed.

Mao: Excellent. I feel relieved. An embassy, so far away, with several oceans [separating it from the homeland].

One more thing, did you invite Britain's Marshal [Bernard Law] Montgomery?

Dorticos: Yes. It is for this reason that our ambassador visited Montgomery in Beijing.

Mao: Did he agree?

Santos: He accepted the invitation. But [we are] not sure [if he will come]. [Even if he comes, he] won't stay long.

Mao: He asked me twice whether it is appropriate for him to visit to Cuba. I asked him: have you agreed yet? He said that he agreed. I asked him: when will you set off? He said next year.

Santos: He told me that [he would come] this December.

Mao: Next year, according to what he told me. But it is also all right with me if you try persuading him to go next year. I'm supporting him in visiting Cuba. I said, "What will you lose if you visit Cuba? You will upset the US, no matter whether you choose to visit or not. After all, the US does not like you. It's therefore better to visit Cuba."

Dorticos: How did he respond?

Mao: He concurred that, of course, the US would not like him anyway. I said: it is not a question concerning Cuba alone, but Latin America as a whole. Cuba does not oppose you the British.

Last year, [on 19 November 1960,] I talked with Comrade [Ernesto "Che"] Guevara who mentioned that the way you confiscated foreign companies from Canada and the UK differed from that of the United States.

Dorticos: Yes, we treated different countries differently.

Mao: Right. Even to imperialist countries, we should be differentiating.

Dorticos: For example, on confiscating foreign banks, we gave no redemption to American banks. But we negotiated with Canadian banks and paid for [their losses].

Mao: Good! Differentiate between them.

Dorticos: We have both diplomatic and trade relations [with Canada].

Mao: What about Britain?

Dorticos: [We] have diplomatic relations.

Mao: This is good! With Britain, France, West Germany, and Japan, [Cuba] could develop diplomatic relations. Are you trading with Japan?

Dorticos: Yes. Apart from socialist countries, Japan is one of the major importers of Cuban sugar. The US pressured Canada, Britain, and Japan. The US pressured particularly Britain and Japan to oppose us. In spite of this, we keep our trade relations.

Mao: Pressure alone never works. Pressure is not persuasive. Didn't [the US] rely on pressure alone in the case of Brazil? [I] don't believe it [will work].

Montgomery [belonged to] one faction within the British Conservative Party. I asked him: Do you belong to the Conservative Party? He said yes. I said: Do you have anyone within the Party listen to your ideas? He said that he has. I said: You are probably the leftist within the Party. He said: yes. I said: I wish for your faction to grow big. He responded that he would have to work on it when he goes back. I asked: Do you stand a chance to be prime minister? He said: no.

Dorticos: Did he speak from his heart?

Mao: I'm afraid so. He is a soldier, he criticizes politicians, and he treats [British Prime Minister Harold] Macmillan as a politician to criticize. He said that the Western world is chaotic and with no leader. He said that disarmament will not succeed, but war is also not worth fighting. Britain has neither the atomic bomb nor the hydrogen bomb, and it would not dare to fight [sic; Britain actually detonated its first atomic bomb in 1952 and its first hydrogen bomb in 1957—ed.] It would not obtain peace, even if it dared to fight—[this scenario] is dangerous—so it cannot fight. How to solve the problem then? [According to Montgomery,] one solution is to recognize East Germany, which means to recognize the existence of two Germanies; the second solution concerns China, to be more precise, Beijing; the third approach is for all countries to withdraw their military bases abroad.

Dorticos: These ideas are bound to make the US dislike him anyway, even without a visit to Cuba.

Mao: There is one of his ideas that could be exploited to your advantage, helping you reclaim Guantanamo [from the United States]. Therefore, you could make further contact with him via your embassy in London when he returns to Britain.

Dorticos: Some contact will surely do good.

Mao: He is a member of the Upper House, a lord, and also with the title of marshal.

Santos: He told me that he will be on a business tour to Central America this December, in which case he will drop by Cuba, though only for 24 hours.

Mao: He said that it will be next year.

Zhou Enlai: He also told me that he would visit Cuba next year. He said that he would go to Japan, then to Canada, afterwards to the Central American and Latin American countries, and next year to Cuba.

[...] [sic]

[Translated for CWHIP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No. 8

Memorandum of Conversation between Mao Zedong and Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos, Beijing, 2 October 1961 (Excerpts)

Time: 4PM - 5:30 PM, 2 October 1961

Venue: Building Six, Diaoyutai State Guesthouse.

Present: Chinese Side: Zhou Enlai, Shen Jian; Cuban Side: Ambassador to China Pino Santos, Ambassador to Mexico [Jose Antonio] Portuono, Ambassador to Czechoslovakia Raúl Roa Kouri

Interpreter: Chen Yongyi

Recorder: Wu Mingqi

[...] [sic]

Chairman Mao: What is the situation in Venezuela?

Dorticos: Very bad. The Venezuelan government is leaning, day by day, towards reactionaries and imperialists. The leftists—the communists and the Revolutionary Left Movement split from the ruling party, the Democratic Action Party—are politically influential, but often have to operate underground. President [Romulo Ernesto] Betancourt [Bello] relies mainly on American financial support. Because of the political inexperience of Venezuelan peasants, President Betancourt has gained some popularity from the peasants in the rural areas. In cities, particularly in Caracas, there emerge people's resistance towards government and the presidency which escalates and compels Betancourt to look for measures of suppressions.

Chairman Mao: Have you seen Venezuela's [Carlos Román] Delgado [Chalbaud Gómez]? I've seen him. He is over 60, a man of curiosity. Do you know him?

Dorticos: Not personally. [But I do] know he belongs to the leftists of the Democratic Action Party. The leader of the leftist revolutionary movement is Domingo [Alberto] Rangel. He used to lead the Youth Movement of the Democratic Action Party. He has maintained an agreeable relationship with the Venezuelan communist party.

Chairman Mao: Could the Revolutionary Left Movement operate only underground?

Dorticos: No, it is legal, except some of its activities do have to go underground due to government suppression. Venezuela is on the verge of revolution. Uprisings of a revolutionary nature could be expected at any minute in Venezuela which is the country where Latin American communist parties call for uprisings to take place. Venezuela is preparing for this scenario. Besides, Venezuela is also facing the problem of reactionary military personnel.

Chairman Mao: A government like Batista's.

Dorticos: But it wears a democratic face, also talking about land reform. Betancourt was a Marxist, but now he is regretting having been a Marxist. When young, he was a member of the Venezuelan communist party.

Roa: He is a founder of the Costa Rican communist party.

Dorticos: It couldn't be worse than to be a regretful communist.

During my visit to Latin American countries one year ago, I went to Venezuela. Some incidents occurred on my arrival in Caracas. Betancourt could not come to receive us, because the airport was filled with slogans against him chanted by people, all terrible slogans. I and foreign minister [Raúl] Roa together met Betancourt in his presidential compound. At the time we could hear chanting through the window: "long live the Cuban Revolution; down with Betancourt." I felt sorry. Betancourt said: you come to create troubles for us. This is not my fault, I replied. Betancourt continued: this situation only happens in Caracas; elsewhere in the country, people still support me.

Now, [Maros Perez] Jimenez retains some influence in the army, attempting to stage a coup d'état to overthrow Betancourt. He [Betancourt] is facing challenges on two fronts, which is why he looks to Washington for help.

Chairman Mao: What is the situation of Peru?

Dorticos: Very bad.

Chairman Mao: Is Peru going to put up with a Cuban exile government set up inside their country?

Dorticos: This is what [Jorge Antonio Fernandez] Pereda proclaimed in the US.

Chairman Mao: Where is the exile government now?

Dorticos: It is said that [the exile government] will be established within the next few days. But no news of its establishment has yet arrived. Each faction is scrambling [for power] at the other's expense, unable to reach an agreement. One major reason, among many, is that everyone wants to be the president. Recently the imperialists have intensified their propaganda activities in America, which, especially after I left Cuba, have become ever more ruthless.

Chairman Mao: The purpose of establishing an exile government is to sabotage [Cuba] and to unite all reactionaries. Have all Latin American countries recognized you?

Dorticos: Many countries severed their relations with us. Almost all Central American countries did this. Peru of South America severed diplomatic relations with us, so did Paraguay. Imperialism forced puppet governments to break off relations with us.

The Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Haiti, Peru, and Paraguay—we have no diplomatic relations with them anymore.

Chairman Mao: But you still have relations with big countries, Mexico, Brazil, and with Panama too.

Dorticos: We have relations with Panama, but only strained relations. We have very good relations with Mexico. We have relations with Venezuela, but again, strained ones. We have relations with Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and etc., to some extent. We also have relations with Canada.

There is information that the Philippines government is preparing for a severance of relations with us. The US pressured it.

Chairman Mao: They listen to the US. Some countries, for instance, Central American countries, could possibly recognize the exile government.

Zhou Enlai: The same strategy has been used [by the US] in Asia. The US hides itself in the dark and forced some countries [to recognize exile governments].

Dorticos: This is what the US wants. Consider the Bay of Pigs Incident, in which the plan was to first occupy a region in the south of Cuba, then separate it from the rest of the country, and finally establish a government which would receive recognition from the US and other countries. We seized from invaders the documents that had all details of the plan.

The Giron Beach and Long Beach are in an area of quagmires. Only two highways and one, perhaps two, lanes lead to that place. They wished to secure the foothold by concentrating their force at the two highways, therefore, holding us off and fortifying the place. With supplies from sea and air, [they planned to] construct the runway right away after they had landed.

Chairman Mao: But their construction proved not fast enough.

Dorticos: Within 72 hours they were vanquished. Under the personal command of Fidel [Castro], a counter-attack was soon organized and no chance was given to them to retain their foothold.

Chairman Mao: Were there inhabitants?

Dorticos: There were. Some were captured [by invaders].

Chairman Mao: Were there also militias?

Dorticos: Near [the landing area] was only a platoon from Cienfuegos City. They were the first to initiate the resistance, only with some light weapons though.

News [of the invasion] came to us at 3 o'clock in the morning. Militias of Matanzas were then all dispatched. The air force started to attack at the first light of dawn, which was of decisive significance. They had one battalion ready for landing; yet under attack from the air, landing became hopeless and [they could] only run for their lives. Some of their ships were armed with cannons targeting the highway and ready to block us. We had a small air force while the enemy's was large, but our men fought gallantly. We lost many men. If the tactical plan had been better prepared, our sacrifice could have been less. Nevertheless, we expected the battle would be ended as soon as possible, and many of us were inexperienced.

Chairman Mao: This time many people acquired experience.

Did you sink any enemy warships?

Dorticos: [We] sank one, but the rest escaped. Both our pilots and anti-aircraft units shot enemy planes. Next day, the US air force sent down 'Sabre' fighters, attempting to cover [the invading force], but soon flew away before the real battle started. Based on the bickering within the US Congress and [John F.] Kennedy's own words, later [we realized that the withdrawal of 'Sabre' fighters] was because Kennedy at the last minute called off the idea of direct involvement of the US air force.

Now we need to cope with a [possible] new and ever bigger invasion.

Chairman Mao: True. It seems that the US did have extra worries. It was afraid of an entrenched war in which you tended not to yield anyway. Meanwhile, it also sensed that the international situation was turning to its disadvantage.

Dorticos: We believe the real reason for the US not daring to publicly invade us was that it could not conquer our country within a short time, making it an established fact.

[Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.9

Memorandum of the Conversation between China's Ambassador to Cuba Shen Jian and Cuban Finance Minister Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Havana, 13 October 1962

Top secret

Foreign Ministry Documents

Conversation between Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Ambassador Shen Jian

Date: 13 October 1962

Venue: Ministry of Industry of Cuba

Ambassador Shen began by offering maps of the strategic situations of several major campaigns of the Chinese Liberation War, as requested earlier by Guevara. Shen explained them one by one. Guevara enquired about Indonesia, Nepal, and the Sino-Indian border issues.

Ambassador Shen: Since I'm leaving for China for holiday on the 15th [of this month], any message you expect me to carry for you?

Guevara: Nothing in particular. Please forward my greetings to Chairman Mao [Zedong], Chairman Liu [Shaoqi], Prime Minister Zhou [Enlai] and other comrades. And please let me, again, point out that it is important that China publish Spanish editions of books [as soon as possible]. The Peking Review so far, still hasn't had its Spanish edition. I'm very much interested in this magazine, because it has many valuable articles.

Ambassador Shen: [The continuing absence of the Spanish edition] is due to the shortage of translation personnel. For the moment, we have only 18 Chinese students studying Spanish in Cuba.

Guevara: 18 are too few. Translating to Spanish is far easier from English than from Chinese. Any possibility that we could translate the English version of the Peking Review into the Spanish one right here in Cuba? By no means am I advising you.

Ambassador Shen: Good idea.

Guevara: We have invited Comrade Anna Louise Strong to visit us. She replied with a letter saying she would, as soon as she finishes her ongoing tasks in China. What do you make of this?

Ambassador Shen: I have not quite been informed of this issue.

Guevara: Please say hello to her for me when you meet her back in China. Let her know that she is always welcome in Cuba and could come whenever suitable. I'm afraid I will be too busy to write her a reply. Her book on people's communes has already been published.⁶⁴ The rest of her books, however, will not. They are not quite the cup of tea for the local readers.

Ambassador Shen: When will the Cuban Socialist Party of Revolution and Unification be set up?

Guevara: Early next year. [We are] recruiting members. It is estimated that only some 50,000 people will enter the short list. Indeed, not many, but it's meant to be selective.

Ambassador Shen: What's the situation of the Cuban economy?

Guevara: The Soviet Union has given lots of aid. We could cope with some basic problems by ourselves, but the overall situation is far from good. We have an agricultural sector that is poorly organized and an industry without its own basis.

Ambassador Shen: Recently the US has pressured other nations not to send their merchant ships to Cuba. Has this had an impact on the Cuban economy?

Guevara: There will definitely be some difficulties in one way or another. But it won't last. The British, for example, didn't yield [to the Americans]. We once expected the arrival of bearings for the sugarcane-reaping machine, after we had made all other components ready for assembly. But in the end, we only found ships which carried these bearings, no more willing to reach Cuba, to unload in Panama.

Ambassador Shen: Apart from the embargo, what other measures would the US turn to?

Guevara: The Americans have always wanted to attack us directly. But this view has yet to gain popularity. They, for the moment, prefer political isolation and sabotage of Cuba, which indeed won't cause any great losses on our part.

Ambassador Shen: What's the view of the ruling class of the US towards the statement of the Soviet Union in support of Cuba?

Guevara: We think the ruling class has been divided into two factions. One is the Pentagon and the other the group rallying behind Kennedy. Both parties have decisive influence on US foreign policy. The Kennedy [faction] appears less arrogant whereas the Pentagon does look more aggressive. The Kennedy [faction] demonstrates their moderation on the issue of POWs exchange [i.e., anti-Castro Cubans held prisoner after the Bay of Pigs invasion]. They promised to offer cargoes worth 50 million.

Ambassador Shen: [The US] used to say that the amount was 62 million. So on top of the cargoes worth 50 million, was there a cash payment of 12 million?

Guevara: Only 2 million cash and the total was 52 million. The bargain is inseparable from negotiation. Indeed, it [the negotiation] is nothing but a deal.

Ambassador Shen: Any possibility to reach a deal?

Guevara: The lawyer [James B. Donovan] said that [reaching a deal] wouldn't be a problem. They, of course, attempted to deceive us by proposing unfairly high priced goods. We turned down their proposal, flatly.

Ambassador Shen: Were those mercenaries released, would they pick up arms and turn against you once more?

Guevara: We couldn't fear them less.

Ambassador Shen: Any other moves on the American part?

Guevara: No idea. Perhaps they would send a neighboring country to attack us, which, of course, won't solve the problem.

Ambassador Shen: What's the motive behind the American recruitment of Cuban counter-revolutionaries?

Guevara: I am not really sure. The rumor goes that these new recruits will be sent to Latin American countries. The Americans expect to symbolize, with this measure, their support to counter-revolutionaries. We are well equipped to crush them however.

Ambassador Shen: Will a world war, do you think, break out as a result of a direct US invasion?

Guevara: I believe so.

Ambassador Shen: Any American moves on this matter?

Guevara: They publicly reject the idea of a possible US attack on Cuba touching off a new world war. In my opinion, they in fact know that a world war could break out. The attitude of the Soviet Union towards us is very clear.

Ambassador Shen: This is a result of your trip [in late August/early September 1962] to Moscow?

Guevara: On the contrary, we [Cuba and the Soviet Union] discussed Soviet backing, and I went to Moscow only with all Soviet support already in hand.

Ambassador Shen: The press says that you and Soviet comrades have exchanged views on certain international issues. Have you reached any agreements yet?

Guevara: There is one point we haven't settled on: in what specific form will the Soviet support be, in the event of a US invasion?

At least, we haven't put this point in written form. Anyhow, we are so convinced, by what the Soviet Union told us, that there's going to be a world war. Also there are other issues that Soviet comrades believe are worth discussing at another time.

We understand the attitude of the Chinese comrades. Some Latin American parties act meanly, in the name of the Soviet Union who, on contrary, is very nice towards us. For instance, the Brazilian communist party said that they didn't want war, because peace was of paramount importance. The Soviet Union knew that we are training new recruits; they, in fact, helped us.

Still there is something we don't quite understand, even as Marxist-Leninists, probably because we need communication of a higher level. For instance, which is confidential, I sent a delegation to a youth meeting (probably in Warsaw). Their performance there turned out to be disappointing. The theme of their speech fell mainly on peace rather than national liberation. They even crossed swords with the Chinese delegation. On hearing this, we replaced the delegation with another in the charge of Liweilong [sic; perhaps the José Rebellón—ed.], the chairman of the College Students Association of Cuba. Now the point is: it is the Soviet Union that released this information – the disappointing performance of the Cuban delegation in Warsaw – to us.

We are distressed at the split of our [socialist] camp, which is why we requested the polemic between the Soviet Union and Albania to be extended no more. The Soviet Union agreed. Albanian comrades, however, published and distributed an anti-Soviet Union statement. We as leaders had the rights and were obligated to see this statement, but again, public distribution was wrong. The problem won't be solved unless both sides admit their faults. At the end of the day, time will solve this problem.

Ambassador Shen: I have not seen that document of Albania. So far Albania has been the smallest fraternal country in the socialist camp, beleaguered by imperialism and capitalism. Never has it stopped fighting against imperialism, feudalism, socialism, and revisionism. On certain issues, Albania admittedly has fundamental disagreement with the Soviet Union, but the disagreement should only be discussed and solved within the framework of proletarian internationalism and egalitarianism. No one would seriously believe that Albania was bullying the Soviet Union, a powerful country. Indeed, as a giant and powerful country, the Soviet Union should take the initiative to promote inter-party and inter-state relationships. Sadly, it is the Soviet Union that touched off the polemic with Albania. The Soviet Union escalated criticism in their party meeting, and furthermore, initiated the termination of the diplomatic relationship between the two

countries. Comrade Zhou Enlai made a speech in the 22th party [CPSU] Congress of the Soviet Union [in Moscow in October 1961], as you know, [which indicated that] we don't agree to the attitude held by our Soviet comrades.

Guevara: Neither do we. The problem is that we don't want to be the arbitrator between them. It's because we are weak and have made little contribution to the development of Marxism-Leninism. The Soviets used to say bad things about Albania. They no longer do so because we reminded them. But [recently] there occurred an incident. Among our military instructors, there was a Soviet. One day he discovered his trainees circulating a book from the Albanians, named "The Clique of Khrushchevite Revisionism," which was, of course, considered [by this officer] as a negative attitude towards the Soviet Union. Although we didn't mention this to Albania, we think this is bad.

The Soviet Union has given us great support, indeed, support that enables us to survive. But we act independently on the Albania problem. Between Albania and Cuba, we have maintained an amicable relationship; we, for example, send exchange students to each other. This is a true practice of proletarian internationalism. We, however, are unwilling to see Cuba pushed onto the battlefield of the [Albania] problem.

Ambassador Shen: I have published the Communiqué of the tenth plenum of the central committee of the Communist Party of China [in September 1962], which re-states our strict adherence to our statements and declarations made in Moscow in 1957 and 1960. We welcome the solidarity between socialist countries to be achieved under the framework of proletarian internationalism. To strengthen the bond [between socialist states], we have made many efforts and will continue doing so. We, of course, never mentioned our losses and difficulties because of our constant attempts to promote [socialist solidarity]. We believe in the principles of the Moscow Declaration. We are still the enemy of revisionism. The Yugoslavian revisionism now becomes ever more rampant. Tito even dared to openly feed American imperialists, via the American journalist, Drew Pearson, advice that aimed to infiltrate and sabotage socialist countries. 250 Americans newspapers have published Tito's speech.⁶⁵ It has been made clear in the [Moscow] Statement of Eighty-one Parties of 1960 that Yugoslavia betrayed socialism. Against the Moscow Declaration of 1957, it developed a revisionist agenda. It received mountains of US dollars from the Americans, sabotaged socialist solidarity, and stood in the way of the national liberation movement. To expose and criticize Yugoslavian modern revisionism is the shared duty for each Marxist-Leninist.

Guevara: I have been to Yugoslavia. That is not, in my opinion, a socialist country. My position is to avoid arguing with it. An OK relationship is just enough. During my visit to Yugoslavia, I was asked for my opinion towards this country's political system. I said that the country was in danger, because the seeds of capitalism had been scattered everywhere. My speech touched off a grand debate.

However, the adverse impact of Yugoslavia has been diminishing. For example, when we had just taken control of Cuba, there were people flirting with the ideas of following the Yugoslav model and factory self-management. Now, such ideas have long disappeared. So I don't think there is any reason for Yugoslavia to remain a serious issue. Of course, by no means am I suggesting that Fidel visit Yugoslavia, or we upgrade our relations with it. In the future, in international meetings, if everyone condemns Yugoslavia, we also will agree to this. I don't understand why Yugoslavia still continues to be a problem. Yugoslavia has become history now.

Ambassador Shen: Admittedly, the influence of Yugoslav revisionism is diminishing, thanks to the efforts made by every Marxist-Leninist to expose and criticize it. But it is far from being in the past. On the contrary, Tito's thoughts remain influential to some extent. It stood in the way of socialist solidarity and tried to undermine the anti-imperialist movement of nationalist countries. Yugoslav revisionism is both alive and active, isn't it? Consider the case of Latin America in which many communist parties are demanding a peaceful transition to socialism. Isn't this the footnote to Tito's lingering adverse impact on socialism?

Guevara: Poland has received more money than Yugoslavia from the Americans. But we still see it as a people's democratic republic, a Marxist-Leninist country.

Ambassador Shen: Tito published a separate modern revisionist agenda. He refused to join the Moscow Declaration of 1957 and the Moscow Statement of 1960—he attacked our socialist camp. Of course, we [China and Cuba] have a fundamental agreement on whether it is good or bad to receive money from imperialists.

Guevara: Didn't one of Jiang Jieshi's [Chiang Kai-shek's] generals end up being the minister of water conservation [of the People's Republic of China]? Sometimes, things turn good from bad, sometimes the other way around. It is dialectics, as we know. So far as I know, within Yugoslavia there are factions. [Leading Yugoslav communist and Tito associate] Edvard Kardelj, for example, is slightly leaning towards the right. This is a circum-

stance which we shall study, to see if change will be made in the future. Anyhow, we don't speak more than we should.

Ambassador Shen: [I agree] both people and things are changing, all the time, either from bad to good, or the other way around. Yet the reason Fu Zuoyi became our minister was because he surrendered his army, cut off his relations with the Jiang Jieshi Clique, and was willing to serve his people. The peaceful liberation of Beijing was indeed a great achievement. However, the fact that some bad people became good does not necessarily mean that other [bad] people would also succeed. Kennedy will not. Imperialists will not. So change is conditional.

Guevara: I agree that change is conditional. Revisionism is a kind of degradation in mind. France is an imperialist country. But while we fight imperialism, the one we target is not France but the US.

Ambassador Shen: Yugoslavia now is the leader of revisionists. Their ultimate demise lies in our constant efforts to fight against them. Marxism-Leninism has proven to grow along with its war on left-leaning and right-leaning thoughts. The principal danger facing us is the right-leaning thoughts, the modern revisionist thought.

Anything new in Latin America?

Guevara: Almost the same as in our last conversation. [Argentine leader] Juan Peron appears left-leaning, seemingly wishing to join the revolution.

Ambassador Shen: The rumor goes that the Argentine communist party wished to form a unified front by cooperating with the Peronist [party].

Guevara: A unified front in election season. The Argentine communist party speaks against Tito while in action it supports Yugoslavia.

It's said that a communist set up a guerrilla force after being expelled by the Columbian communist party. [Ironically,] the Party then condemned him by publishing his name. Furthermore, the Party sent another party member to the police department, releasing the poor man's name as well as his location in the mountains. Thanks to their comrades, all communist guerrillas were killed in the end.

Guevara: The Guatemalan revolution is developing, and [Marco Antonio] Yon Sosa is currently in Cuba which is entirely confidential. A son of an Indian person and a Chinese immigrant, he was an army officer of little education or

understanding of Marxism-Leninism. He is, however, a sincere person, willing to listen and learn. I believe that he will make a splash in the world.

Ambassador Shen: What is the present situation of their guerrilla area?

Guevara: They have no area for guerrilla warfare. They are urban fighters, operating in cities. We are suggesting that they should open a guerrilla battlefield [in the countryside].

Cc: Chairman (MAO Zedong), Shaoqi (LIU Shaoqi), Enlai (ZHOU Enlai), ZHU De, CHEN Yun, LIN Biao, Xiaoping (Deng Xiaoping), PENG Zhen, Fuchun (LI Fuchun), Xiannian (LI Xiannian), HE Long, Dinyi (LU Dinyi), Boda (CHEN Boda), KANG Sheng, Jiaxiang (WANG Jiaxiang), Shangkun (YANG Shangkun), Qiaomu (HU Qiaomu), Ruiqing (LUO Ruiqing), KONG Yuan, FANG Yi, LI Tao (4), Central Confidential Office, Party Foreign Office (5), Central Propaganda Office (2), Central Liaison Office (5), Central Investigation Office (4), Military Intelligence Office (4), Ministry of Public Security (2), Literature Commission (2), Headquarters of the General Staff (9), Lengxi (WU Lengxi), Muzhi (ZHU Muzhi)

CHEN, ZHANG, JI, ZENG, GENG, HUANG, MENG, QIAO, HAN, LIU, Admin Office of Foreign Ministry (3), Research Office, Soviet-European Office of Foreign Ministry, American-Australian Office of Foreign Ministry, Ambassador SHEN, Ambassador, Archive (3) --- Total copies (84)

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 109-03157-01, pp 15-24. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.10

A Report of the Conversation with Cuban Interior Minister Binianyiluo, 24 October 1962

Foreign Ministry and Military Intelligence Department,

This afternoon, [Cuban] Interior Minister Binianyiluo [sic] visited [us] and talked about the following items:

On the morning of the 22nd [of October], Cuba received the information that Washington had been actively deploying, and the US would take strong measures. In the afternoon, combat readiness was ordered by the Americans. But

Cuba did not expect those measures that appeared in [John] Kennedy's speech. Now Cuba has adopted all necessary measures. Raúl [Castro] has left for Oriente Province.

Yesterday, a US airplane crashed in the Guantanamo Base. Both sides are on alert now. The most dangerous military gathering point of US is Puerto Rico—there are two aircraft carriers, ships on which helicopters could land, and amphibious vessels that could transport fifteen thousand troops—socialist countries' ships normally all come from that direction.

The US navy commander made an order, thanking Latin American countries (such as Argentina) for faithful assistance. The US demands that between naval units, the radio contact, for the purpose of confidentiality, should be used as little as possible. This is a practice that is only adopted when the situation is tense. The US force involved in the blockade is estimated to be of between 30 and 40 thousand personnel.

At 9 o'clock this morning, two ships arrived. No accidents occurred. Now several other Soviet ships are heading towards Cuba. The situation will definitely become tense if Soviet ships and US warships meet each other head on. [Let's] see what, in the end, the US will do. The development of the situation and which strategy the enemy will adopt will be clearer within next 48 hours.

Special report.

Embassy in Cuba
24 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, pp.5-6. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.11

Chinese Embassy in Havana, Report on the Meeting between Huang Wenyong, Chinese Chargé d'Affaires in Cuba, and Joaquín Ordoqui, Member of the National Leadership Committee of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations of Cuba, Havana, 24 October 1962

Foreign Ministry and Military Intelligence Department,

On the night of 24 October, Counselor Huang [Wenyong] had a meeting with Ordoqui, member of the national leadership committee of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (IRO). Ordoqui said that the present situation

in Cuba was good. Over the past few months [the IRO] has, as to buy time [for war preparation], made arrangements in all sectors. More than forty brigades have been raised with both civil defense and militias having started to be mobilized. In Havana, 96 million rifles, as long as they could still shoot, have been distributed among soldiers. On top of these, thirteen anti-amphibious battalions have been established, which were small in number of personnel but very strong in firepower. Settlements have been made on industrial and agricultural productions. Because of the war and mobilization, industrial production will shrink and perhaps even stagnate. By contrast, the agricultural sector will be different. [Cubans] will not starve to death; [they are] estimated to hold out for some year and half. The oil supply is a headache. [The IRO] has drafted a proposal for restricting petrol consumption which will be promulgated soon. The people worked in a high spirit, ready to engage [the enemy] at any minute, which in Ordoqui's opinion is critical. He added that Fidel Castro's speech yesterday is correct, [and] has received positive reactions from the people.

On a [possible] American invasion, he reckoned that by the end of this week, the US would have mobilized four divisions. An American aircraft carrier has already anchored in the water not far from Cuba. Today near the Mariel Harbor an American aircraft [was detected] which flew towards Cuba and at about 300 meters off the Cuban coast, rose quickly to a level as high as 3000 meters. The American air force has frequently intruded into Mariel, Matanzas, Oriente, and the hinterland of Havana Province. Their provocation and intrusion into Cuban territorial sky have proved increasingly blatant. The General Staff has ordered to shoot down [invading American aircraft], on the only condition that the wreckage could be collected on Cuban territory.

He also mentioned the meeting [on 18 October] between John F. Kennedy and [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei] Gromyko, which appeared not good. Kennedy demonstrated a hard line. Kennedy said: "We have evidence to prove that Cuba has already obtained the aggressive weaponry. Why do you say that the weaponry is defensive?" "Why do you bother asking if you [already] have the evidence?" Gromyko answered.

Embassy to Cuba
25 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-05, pp.1-2. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.12

Chinese Embassy, Havana, A Brief Report of Recent Activities in Cuba, 24 October 1962

Foreign Ministry:

Prime Minister Fidel Castro made a speech which was broadcast nation-wide by television. In his speech, he criticized [John] Kennedy's statement published the day before yesterday and rejected unreasonable demands from the US On issues such as the so-called aggressive weaponry and defensive weaponry, disarmament, enquiries into Cuba by UN-assigned delegates, his attitude was clear and resolute. He expressed firmly that [Cuba] will resist a comprehensive embargo from the US and a direct American invasion. At the end of his speech, he touched on the statement issued by the Soviet Union; instead of stressing Soviet support, he emphasized that the Cubans knew how to defend their motherland. Cuban people responded, "Fidel's speech is brave. Cuban people are surely brave."

Fidel spoke with dignity and calmness, instead of appearing agitated as he used to be. On the other hand, he seemingly also spoke with a heavy heart, as his facial expression couldn't help betray his fatigue. The present audience, including the President, members of the United Revolutionary Leadership Committee, and the Interior Minister, all wore arms. Raúl [Modesto Castro] and [Ernesto Che] Guevara were absent. Within the Leadership Committee, the deputy Defense Minister, the commander of the west military region, the Labor Minister (also as the commander of Civil Defense), too, were absent. Presumably they were all in their war positions.

Following the Soviet Union issuing their statement yesterday afternoon, [the newspaper] *Hoy* [Today] produced a supplement and the TV station also broadcast [the statement] several times. But, the Cuban people's reaction wasn't quite welcoming. One journalist from the Latin American Press Association told me, "the Soviet statement isn't quite what I expected." Some Havana University students even commented, "this statement is very bad"; [they] indicated that they were very unhappy [with it].

Havana is the same as usual. Gas stations are restored to normality but there is less traffic and fewer pedestrians than before. Businesses operate as usual, with no sign of panic buying. In the downtown, propaganda squads, filled by female militias, work with a high spirit. The mobilization of the masses remains ongoing. Outpatient services have already been suspended by hospitals, and patients with minor illnesses have been sent back to their homes. In

line with Guevara's instruction, every mine is still working, trying to answer the call to "continue and improve production." Our oil prospecting group is also working. Quite a few students, from the engineer training class offered by our technical staff here, have enlisted themselves, but the rest keep studying. On the whole, the people are calm, and there is confidence towards the revolutionary government and Castro.

An American warship was reported early this morning to have been seen off the Havana coast. A cargo ship was expected to arrive this morning but it has not arrived even this afternoon. The Cuban revolutionary government has informed two airlines, the United Arab Airlines [*Alian*] and Holland Airlines [i.e., KLM Royal Dutch Airlines], that no passenger plane shall land in Cuban airports, until a new notice [to be given from Cuban government]. However, Czechoslovakia and Cuba are still connected by an airline.

Special report.

China's Embassy in Cuba
24 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-07, pp.1-2. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.13

Chinese Foreign Ministry, Internal memorandum, Request to Issue a Government Statement on the Cuban Crisis, 24 October 1962

Extremely urgent

In accordance with Premier's [Zhou Enlai's] instruction, we have drafted a government statement in support of Cuba. This statement is planned to be broadcast on the morning of the 25th of October, and to appear in the newspaper of the day. Prior to the broadcast, it is planned that copies of the statement, in Chinese and in foreign languages, will be distributed by the news division [of the foreign ministry] among journalists of each country in Beijing, and handed by the American-Australian division [of the foreign ministry] to the Cuban embassy in China. Please examine and instruct whether [this plan] is feasible.

Foreign Ministry

24 October, 1962

Comments by Qiao Guanhua, 24 October 1962:
Please send [copies] to Geng [Biao], Zhang [Hanfu], Marshal
Chen [Yi], and Premier [Zhou Enlai] for examination.

Comments by Zhou Enlai, 25 October 1962:
Send [copies] to the Foreign Ministry and the office of
Xinhua News Agency

*[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00595-08,
p.1. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]*



Document No.14

Chinese Embassy, Havana, Report on
Conversation with Cuban Official Joaquín
Ordoqui, 27 October 1962

Foreign Ministry:

This morning [27 October 1962], Ordoqui told us:

The US continues to clamor for war. Yesterday in particular, they proposed to carry out an invasion; Cuba estimated, it could get underway early this morning. Cuba has everything prepared, with 500 thousand people mobilized. The US was estimated to have gathered in Florida 500 thousand people; this number might well have been exaggerated. But [the US] urgently built up a series of rocket launch platforms in Florida. Over 100 aircrafts were deployed nearby. American aircraft carriers were operating in an area 14 nautical miles off Cuban territorial waters.

Yesterday the US demanded the removal of Cuban missile bases, which seemingly indicates an increasing American appetite: they wish to push the Soviet Union aside and start to deal with Cuba with no holds barred. Someone in the US clamored that the US's military base in Turkey was built up openly, yet the Soviet Union set up [their base in Cuba] in a sneaky way. "What sort of policy is it?" they asked. [They] even insisted that the Cuban-Soviet agreement should be published, and added that Artemisa base was again reinforced. It appears the US is plotting an invasion.

Soviet ships that arrived recently were, in fact, not hindered, nor investigated [by the US]. [The rumor of Soviet ships being stopped or inspected] might have been propaganda on the radio. It is reported that [US warships] only asked

by signals about the nature of cargoes. Ships replied that these are cargoes of oil, and nothing [serious] ensued.

[Fidel] Castro is firm. Even if Cuba were be wiped out by a possible nuclear war, as Castro said, imperialism would be closer to facing its demise and global socialism would arrive sooner. Ordoqui said to Castro that [earlier] they didn't expect to see the victory of the revolution, but they do now; therefore, [they] were convinced that they could even see imperialism being toppled. Castro replied, "both of us will see the arrival of this moment."

Chinese Embassy in Cuba
27 October 1962

*[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive; No. 111-00342-09,
pp.5-6. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]*



Document No.15

Chinese Embassy, Accra, Ghana, Report on Conversation
with the Third Secretary of Cuban Embassy, 27 October
1962

Foreign Ministry,

The Cuban Embassy's third secretary visited our embassy at 3 PM on 27 October, acknowledging Chargé d'Affaires Wang: the director secretary of the Foreign Ministry of Ghana, Akui [sic] under the order of [Kwame] Nkrumah this morning visited and informed the Cuban chargé d'affaires of the following news:

Ghana proposed a delegation, which shall be filled by 40 people from African-Asian countries of the UN, to inspect Cuban military establishments.

The US is going to attack Cuba at half past nine tonight, or tomorrow. American warships are on their way to Cuba. (Akui however did not identify the source of [this] information.)

Special report.

China's Embassy in Ghana
27 October 1962

*[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-09,
p3. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]*



Document No.16

Chinese Embassy, Havana, Report of Conversation between Chargé d'Affaires Huang Wenyou and Chilean Economic Advisor Jaime Barrios, 28 October 1962

Foreign Ministry,

The Chilean economic advisor, Jaime [Barrios] (now serving in the president's compound), told to Chargé d'Affaires Huang,

Yesterday, Cuban troops shot down an American airplane in Pinar del Rio.

Three proposals have so far been put forth, respectively from [Nikita] Khrushchev, [John] Kennedy and Fidel [Castro]. But our attitude is firm: Fidel's second declaration was reflected well among the masses, and today's statement (referring to the five conditions) is also very important, to which the detailed reactions are yet to emerge. Cuba's sovereignty must be guaranteed, and the Cuban people have the right to decide their own matters. Yet we also need to be discreet and firm in practice.

The danger of a US invasion remains, but the US wanted to realize its goal by negotiating, which is clearly shown in the US declaration. Khrushchev, too, expressed the wish to negotiate. Therefore, if the rocket weapons are to be withdrawn, it should be traded for the withdrawal of the missile bases in Turkey and the return of Guantanamo. This is, if the negotiation succeeds, a good thing. But the US will not agree. The United States will bomb the Soviet Union base, and after that it will say that it has achieved its goal, and claim [to be the] winner itself. It is a good opportunity for the US to invade Cuba; the situation depends on the development of events in the next few days.

He said he did not know the news of Khrushchev with respect to the unconditional withdrawal of bases. He said, if the withdrawal is conditional, our government will not be shocked; but if it was a surrender-like withdrawal, then it becomes a blow to the Cuban people, Latin American people, the socialist camp and the strength of the people of the world, while feeding the arrogance of imperialism.

The world's people are standing with Cuba. But the present development of the people's movement is slow in some countries, such as in Chile which still needs the masses to take actions. Some countries' declarations remain on paper, with no sign of struggle. What the Cuban people need is active support, such as mass mobilization; because if there is no action, the crime of those who hold power will not be stopped.

He spoke with considerable discretion today.

Special Report.

Embassy in Cuba.
28 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, pp.7-8. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.17

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Report on a Conversation with Two Deputy Department Heads of Cuban General Staff, 30 October 1962

Foreign Ministry and the 2nd Department of the General Staff,

On the 30th [of October], two deputy department heads of the Cuban General Staff, respectively from the revolutionary education department and the film department, talked to our military attaché. They said that [Cuban] troops were in a high spirit and on constant alarm, and that [Cuban troops] would not believe the so-called guarantee from American imperialism; instead, they believe in their own strength, the strength of the people and the support of socialist countries and all people of the world. We enquired about the response of the troops towards Fidel [Castro]'s statement, letters from [Nikita] Khrushchev and [John F.] Kennedy, and [UN Secretary-General] U Thant's visit to Cuba. The deputy director of revolutionary education said that the general response is that [the troops] believe Fidel's statement, believe our leader's words. The troops were discussing Fidel's statement, during which they did not mention Khrushchev or the Soviet Union alone, [they] instead only spoke of socialist countries; [Cuban troops] paid close heed to our country's [China's] statement, popular assemblies in Beijing and Tianjin metropolises.

Besides, [we] heard that on the 28th [of October] [sic] an American airplane was shot down by anti-aircraft rockets, exploded immediately with the wreckage spreading across an area of 12 square kilometers.⁶⁶

Embassy in Cuba
30 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, p.11. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.18

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Summary of the Conversation between Huang Wenyou and the head of Socialist Country Division of the Cuban Foreign Ministry José Fuxá, and others, 31 October 1962

Foreign Ministry,

[We're] now presenting you the summary of the conversation between comrade Huang Wenyou, the head of the socialist country division of the Cuban foreign ministry, [José] Fuxá, and the head of US-Canadian division, [Cecilio] Martinez (previously the first secretary of the Embassy in China):

As to the [Cuban] reaction to China's support, Fuxá said, "China's support to Cuba via prompt organization of demonstrations has been a great encouragement to us. We feel very grateful." Martinez said, "China's statement has increased our strength. The Chinese government and people are, indeed, a government of revolution and people of revolution."

With respect to the present situation, Martinez commented, "last week the world experienced an unparalleled, unprecedented peril. Now the perilous situation has gone, though a few questions are left and we need to continue the struggle. That [Cuba's] foreign minister, [Raúl] Roa, went to the UN to open a new front is a mere change of form [of struggle], and the revolution will continue progressing. He also said, "This is the victory of peace, because the attempt of imperialists was to start a war, but now war has been prevented. At least for the time being, [imperialists] haven't started the war. This incident proves that the peaceful forces have the upper hand, and peace comes not at the mercy of imperialism, but by active striving. It is because of the Cuban people, the development of Soviet technology, and socialist countries who not only have atomic bombs but also people, such as the Chinese people, etc., that the war was avoided. Fuxá said, "The situation is developing fast: [we are] not finished with reading one [piece of] information when another reply has already come in. One week ago, [we] could not think about the possibility of negotiation; [but now] we hope that this negotiation will generate productive results. Imperialism will not easily abandon their attempt, and we should maintain

the mobilization status and be vigilant. American imperialism should give more than words, they should act."

One attendant of the protocol department said, "The situation is developing fast. Although it did not exactly follow what we expected, this happened for a reason: because the affair was specific; it could not be solved by alternatives; it should be either this way, or the other way, there is no way in between."

Special report.

Embassy in Cuba
31 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, pp.13-14. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian]



Document No.19

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, Report on Conversation with Joaquín Ordoqui, 31 October 1962

Foreign Ministry,

Tonight Ordoqui said:

"Someone (referring to the Soviet Union) does not agree to the five conditions we raised."

2) "When negotiating with [UN Secretary-General] U Thant, we made Cuba's position crystal clear. Fidel [Castro] told him [U Thant] that an inspection, regardless of its form, would not be approved [by Cuban leaders], nor would it be approved by the Cuban people. We already have the experience of Congo. The basis of negotiation will be these five points; no other issues could be discussed. This time U Thant's attendants, too, have returned with disappointment."

Fidel said that we would not back down, not to mention conceding, and that [we] should be firm; if not, [we] will bring immeasurable loss to Latin American people.

3) Ordoqui said: The Brazilian president [João Goulart] sent [his aide, Gen. Albino] da Silva to Cuba, indicating that the Brazilian government is willing to mediate in the hopes of solving the Cuban problem, that the US is also willing to maintain relations with Cuba, and that [the Brazilian government] wants Cuba to return to the Organization of American

States. Fidel thanked them for their efforts, indicating to him [Silva] that Cuba approves [the Brazilian government's initiative to] do so. Regarding the issue of joining the Organization [of American States], it would not be approved, but we also know the direction to which [we] should march. [Fidel] maintained that Cuba will defend its own endeavor in a resolute manner.

Embassy in Cuba
31 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-05, pp. 15-16. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.20

Chinese Embassy in Moscow, "Khrushchev's Reconciliation with the United States on the Question of the Cuban Missile Crisis,"
31 October 1962

Foreign Ministry:

Khrushchev's reconciliation and submission to American imperialism constitutes a fiasco in the diplomatic struggle of the Soviet Union. Its influence on future development is bound to be extremely negative. Our preliminary views are as follows:

A development, extremely favoring the struggle against American imperialism, emerged at the moment when the American imperialists declared a blockade against Cuba. But just when the people were being mobilized and about to take action and the contradiction within imperialism was deepening, Khrushchev did not take advantage of the development, [which was at the time] extremely unfavorable to the US. He did not conduct a tit-for-tat struggle and push the development of the crisis [in the direction favoring anti-imperialism]. Instead, after performing [a few] gestures of struggle, he gradually backed down, and started to make a series of concessions, in the name of [being] cautious, calm, and rational, to the point of agreeing to dismantle and retrieve missiles previously deployed to Cuba, under United Nations supervision. This way, the Soviet Union had turned from initiative to passivity. From being a plaintiff condemning the US for threatening and invading Cuba, [it has now become] a defendant, admitting smuggling strategic weaponry and threaten-

ing US security. [The Soviet Union] abandoned the advantage [which resulted from] supporting Cuba, a sovereign country, in conducting a just struggle; it, instead, disadvantaged itself by deserting Cuba and accepting all American conditions which were compensated by a guarantee of empty words. [By contrast,] the US has risen, from a pirate, condemned by the world with one voice, to a savior, defending the security of the Western Hemisphere and the peace of the world as a whole. The very situation encourages the arrogance of American imperialists while discouraging the global anti-American movement, indeed, to an unprecedented degree. [However, this situation] also further exposes the true face of revisionists and their weakness.

The reason why Khrushchev squandered the favorable situation of anti-imperialism, even at the expense of revolutionary interests, was his fear of war blackmail from American imperialists. He miscalculated the situation, [thinking] that the world had already slipped to the verge of a nuclear war, and unless concessions were made, all [countries] would perish together. Pravda says that the past week has been the most difficult week since the end of World War II, with the entire humanity lingering on the verge of a nuclear disaster. In the cable sent to [Bertrand A. W.] Russell, Khrushchev also repeatedly emphasized that once the war erupts, it will be a total world war with nuclear weapons being used. This fear could also be read from his letter to Kennedy. Meanwhile, the Soviet support to Cuba proved far from sincere, it was carried out in line with the general strategy of promoting peaceful Soviet-American co-existence. Because of this, [the Soviet Union] sacrificed the interests of the Cuban and world revolution when danger approached. When American imperialists encircled Cuba with its troops, ready to attack at any minute, and charged the Soviet Union with deploying aggressive weaponry, Khrushchev sent messages to John Kennedy, yet, not to defend Cuba's sovereignty and its legitimate right to weaponry of any form. Rather, he reassured Kennedy by repeatedly highlighting the fact that those weapons were in the hands of Soviet troops and any worry would be therefore unnecessary. In the end, he yielded to American bidding [zhìyì] by retrieving those weapons [from Cuba], giving not even the slightest attention to Cuba's opinion. Khrushchev even allowed, on Cuba's behalf, for the UN to send officials to conduct inspections on Cuban territory. By doing all these, the Soviet Union avoided being Cuba's protector. These activities have caused damage to Cuba's pride and sovereignty, and are also considerably harmful to Cuba's revolutionary struggle.

By conceding on the issue of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Khrushchev's calculation was to ingratiate and trade with Kennedy for a general improvement of Soviet-American relations which would lead to the settlement of other inter-

national disputes. On the part of Kennedy, his basic objective [in negotiations with the Soviet Union] was to remove Cuba, this nail in the eye. [He, then,] exploited the illusions of Khrushchev by releasing empty bait, and then demanded further concessions from the Soviet Union on the Cuba question. Khrushchev exhausted his words to exculpate Kennedy. Repeatedly, he expressed his understanding, satisfaction, confidence, respect, and gratitude towards Kennedy, saying that Kennedy had made rational decisions and demonstrated the will of peace. [All these gestures] invariably stemmed from the concern to arrange a Cuba deal as a starting point, with the ultimate goal to push for reconciliations to be reached on other questions. These topics are disarmament, prohibiting nuclear tests, nuclear non-proliferation, mutual non-aggression between the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the WTO (Warsaw Treaty Organization).

Khrushchev's behavior will inevitably generate extremely bitter fruits. First, it feeds the arrogance of American imperialists. The counter-revolutionaries in the world will hail it in one voice. The prestige of Kennedy has been considerably enhanced, which will enable him to demand more concessions in future bargains. Second, Khrushchev's activities amounted to a bowl of cold water, poured right over the Cuban people who have been fighting on the front line of the battle against the Americans. Because of Khrushchev, those who sit on the fence have now leaned rightward. However, this incident [i.e. the Soviet-American reconciliation] has again exposed to the world the true face of the modern revisionists. The people of the world have been offered an ever more unforgettable lesson: imperialism should be fought against on one's feet and in this struggle, revisionists can by no means be counted on.

From now on, American imperialists will, under the banner of the UN, create troubles for Cuba. Modern revisionists will, regardless of Cuba's interests, continue to seek the opportunity to reconcile with the US, or even the possibility of opening high-level meetings by imitating the model generated from the Cuba Missile Crisis management. In the latter case, the development of the situation will become more complicated.

Embassy to the Soviet Union
31 October 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-12, pp.1-3. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.21

Chinese Embassy, Havana, A Report on Fidel Castro's
Televised Address, 1 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

Tonight Castro delivered a televised nationwide speech and talked about the following issues:

1) Word by word, [Castro] read the published part of the memorandum of the conversation between Cuba and [UN Secretary-General] U Thant.

2) [He] reiterated the five points that Cuba insisted [on].

3) During the course of the Cuban crisis, Cuba and the Soviet Government had a disagreement. But this is not the right place for discussing it, for the situation could be exploited by [their] enemies. We are all Marxist-Leninists, and we could sit and talk between two parties and between two governments. We are not happy with particular facts and details. But we shall also bear in mind, especially at this moment, the generous aid from the Soviet Union. [Castro] demanded that people be disciplined.

4) [Castro] explained that the weaponry shipped away by the Soviet Union did not belong to Cuba.

5) [Castro] praised the fighting spirit demonstrated by [the Cuban] people during this period. The long-range missile in our minds could never be shipped away.

We hold that this speech was well written with a correct attitude. With close reference to the confusion in people's minds, [the speech] delivered a powerful blow to imperialism and revisionism.

Embassy in Havana
1 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-07, p. 3. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.22

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Report of the Conversation
between Chargé d'Affaires Huang Wenyou and Cuban
Foreign Trade Minister, Alberto Mora Becerra, 1 November
1962

Foreign Ministry,

Today during comrade Huang Wenyou's official visit to Cuban foreign trade minister, Mora, the latter spoke [as follows]:

The Cuban people unite around the leader and support the five conditions. Without these conditions, nothing will be guaranteed.

We have noticed the *People's Daily's* editorial about supporting Cuba. [We] feel grateful as well as satisfied towards the support from the Chinese people. The Chinese people are our real brothers and comrades.

We understand that Chinese comrades struggled with the Norwegian ship owners and forced it to go to Cuba, for which we feel deeply grateful. Yet on the other hand, I think you will also understand that this [i.e. the incident of forcing the Norwegian ship to go to Cuba] was regrettable, for it not only affected us, but also the global endeavor. We feel very uncomfortable [with this incident]. But our position is firm and serious; peace could not be begged for.

The situation of previous days was very tense: at any minute an invasion and a nuclear war could occur. Our people were calm and vigilant, guarding as usual their combat and production positions.

Finally, he [Mora] asked Charge d'Affaires Huang to forward to the Chinese people the gratitude of the Cuban people.

Embassy in Cuba
1 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, p.19. Translated for CWHIP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.23

Chinese Embassy, Havana, A Complementary Report of the Conversation with Joaquin Ordoqui, 1 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

A complementary report of the conversation with Ordoqui:
1) Before [he] arrived in Cuba, [UN Secretary-General] U Thant had indicated that he would bring over 100 journalists

with him. Fidel decided not to let them in; Cuba rejected [U Thant's proposal] by expressing the inability of Cuba to host so many people.

2) Someone (referring to the Soviet Union) observed that the five conditions raised by Cuba made the situation more complicated. But Fidel [Castro] indicated that the Cubans too wish the problem could be simpler, [asking] why would [people] want things to become complicated? [Fidel said,] the problem now is that it is no longer a military question, but a political one.

3) Insurgents and militias are both in a high spirit. Cuba shot down a U-2 [on 27 October], but did not announce it. The [body of] pilot Maj. [Rudolf] Anderson was found after [the] crash with his corpse divided into two. Cuba was prepared to ship it back to the US. Out of [the wreckage] of the airplane Cuba found some documents. The US took more aerial photographs of Cuba than there are [pictures] of the American film star, Marilyn Monroe. The US also tries to find information everywhere, probing if Cuba has had atomic bombs. Rumor goes that they [the US] asked 6 countries' ambassadors, including the Japanese ambassador who answered, "perhaps not."

4) The US is still preparing for war. Along the coast of Key West anti-aircraft missiles have been deployed, and troops are still under mobilization. The danger of an invasion remains, but it is less imminent. If the US did want a war, they would have blown up the Soviet missile bases a long time ago. A nuclear war does not at all need an announcement. [The US] did not make an announcement before they dropped atomic bombs in Japan, whereas this time Kennedy is kicking up a fuss by making many statements, which looks like deceit and blackmail. The US is not prepared for a big war. So far it could only mobilize 6 divisions, one airborne unit. If a war against Cuba is to start, these troops are far from enough. Unless [the US] uses nuclear weapons to destroy Cuba, there is nothing to be feared. Fidel has a clear vision: even if Cuba is to be completely destroyed, socialism will prevail anyway. Fidel said, "If the US wants a war, we will give them one. [yaoda jiuda] Once the war begins, the US too won't have a good time." Cuba could attack the US fleet with the weapons it now has. Of course, we [the Cubans] are unable to destroy their entire fleet, but we could shatter a part of it. The Guantanamo base is now being besieged by us, completely.

5) We understand well that [if we were to] be weaker towards imperialism, it would immediately be bloated with pride. [Therefore, we] should be firm and knock down its arrogance.

Cuba needs military and political aid, in particular, from socialist countries, without which Cuba's survival is impossible.

Embassy in Cuba
1 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-05, pp.17-18. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.24

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, The Problem of How to Express a Position on the Cuban-Soviet Relationship, 2 November 1962

Special Urgency & Priority Demanded

Foreign Ministry,

In recent dealing with foreigners [we] felt that Cuban government officials spoke very discreetly, avoiding mentioning the Soviet Union. Among the masses, some were very careful, others harshly criticized [Nikita] Khrushchev. In view of the above-mentioned circumstance, the party committee of the embassy decided that when dealing with foreigners, embassy staff, exchange students, etc., [we] should not, at our initiative, mention the Cuban-Soviet relationship, and all should, in accordance to editorials from the homeland and leaders' speeches, positively indicate our support for the Cuban people. Because of [these measures we] haven't encountered any problem in dealing with foreigners. Last night Fidel [Castro]'s report pointed out in particular that the Cuban-Soviet disagreement ought to be left to the party and government to solve, and requested that people not discuss it everywhere. [Anastas] Mikoyan arrived in Cuba this afternoon. The Cuban-Soviet relationship is very complex. We should be very cautious when dealing with foreigners: not only should we express our full support for the correct position of Cuba, but also avoid being misunderstood that we have deep interest in the Cuban-Soviet relationship. For this reason we are prepared to abide by the following several principles when dealing with foreigners in the near future:

- to continue referring to editorials published in the past and speeches of leaders and positively indicate our support for the Cuban people

- to indicate clearly that Fidel's speech on 1 [November 1962] is absolutely correct, and that we fully support it.

On the Cuban-Soviet relationship, we do not mention [it] at our initiative. If our counterpart first mentions it, we should express our support for Fidel's position on the Cuban-Soviet relationship as indicated in the report on the night of 1 [November 1962]. We [should] always uphold the principle of proletarian internationalism as stipulated in the Moscow Declaration: based on genuine equality and independence, problems between fraternal parties and socialist countries should be dealt via negotiations in the form of notifying.

Please instruct [us] if the above ideas are suitable or not.

Embassy in Cuba
2 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00601-05, pp.3-4. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian]



Document No.25

Chinese Embassy in the Soviet Union, The Soviet Union Continued a Reconciliatory Approach to the Cuban Problem, 2 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

The Soviet Union continued a reconciliatory and submissive approach to the situation in Cuba:

In external propaganda, [the Soviet Union] strove to defend and boast about its policy. [It] published one after another cables from individual pacifists in the world to [Nikita] Khrushchev, extolling his achievement of saving peace and humanity.'

Until now the government still hasn't publicly expressed its support for the five conditions stipulated in Cuba's statement [of 28 October].

The Soviet Union] did not dare report the real situation of the negotiation between [UN Secretary-General] U Thant and [Fidel] Castro. It merely commented that the contact [between U Thant and Castro] is beneficial. It did not mention at all that no agreement was reached.

On the US blockade and aerial surveillance of Cuba, and [the US] clamoring for enlarging the scope of embargo, [the Soviet Union] only reported objectively but dared not con-

demn. Some Soviet media even argued that these measures of American imperialism were [the result of] the proposals from American militant groups, whereas the White House was comparatively cautious. They even said something like that the US was in a contest between rationality and militant groups.

[The Soviet Union] avoided reporting our country's important editorials and speeches in support of Cuba. Instead, [it] adopted an approach of raping the people's will: under the title of "the entire world supporting and thanking the wise policy of the Soviet Union," it published the news on rallies in support of Cuba [being organized] in many places of our country.

[It] did not at all report any news on the Cuban people actively preparing to strike back at the American imperialist invasion; regarding [Fidel] Castro's speech, [it] reported just the nice words on the Soviet Union, instead of the parts which defended revolution and opposed American imperialist invasion.

Although the Soviet Union strove to decorate the picture as the measures of the Soviet Union had taken effect and saved [the world] from the Cuban crisis, the situation was developing in the opposite direction. The US assumed their [old] attitude, which is now more arrogant, and the process [aiming at] invading Cuba was accelerated. Cuba then became even more resolute, opposing firmly the Soviet Union's selling its sovereignty. Under these circumstances, the Soviet Union was very worried, which was why [Anastas] Mikoyan left ahead of schedule for Havana to mediate.

Judging from the fact that Mikoyan stopped in New York in the middle of his rush to Havana, the mission of Mikoyan's trip is to suppress Cuba along with the US [The plan might be:] first, make some contacts with the US; [then,] further the demonstration of the good will from the Soviet Union; request that the US honor its own promise; and afterwards, compel Cuba to abandon some demands and to cooperate with the US

However, in order to consolidate the first victory of its aggression on Cuba, the US will not give much capital to the Soviet Union. On the contrary, [the US] will probably exploit this opportunity and throw more pressure on the Soviet Union, compelling it to make ever bigger concessions and meanwhile exaggerating the conflict between the Soviet Union and Cuba, while Cuba will not yield, in which case Mikoyan will hardly complete his mission. To let the Soviet Union break the deadlock, Khrushchev is very likely to propose another advanced meeting with Kennedy.

Embassy in the Soviet Union
2 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00601-07, pp.11-12. Translated from Chinese for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.26

Chinese Embassy, Havana, The Situation of the American Blockade of Cuba, 2 November 1962

Military Intelligence Department,

The head of the 2nd division of Cuban military intelligence department, Yitulinuo [transliteration], described the situation of the American blockade of Cuba as follows:

From 22 to 29 October, [in the area stretching] from Cabanas of Pinar del Rio Province, to Bahia de Santa Clara of Matanzas Province, every day there were some 170 sorties of American airplanes conducting scouting and blockading (at heights between 5,000 to 10,000 meters); the American aircraft carrier, Independence, was operating in these waters; it constantly sent and received airplanes, scouting and taking photography [over an area stretching] from Havana Province, Bay of Pigs Cuban air-fields, all the way to Oriente Province. In the Florida Channel, there were often 40 to 50 warships. The American aircraft carrier, Enterprise, C.V.A.N.-65, appearing in the waters to the east end of the Bahamas [Panamas in text] and near the Turks, constantly received and sent airplanes, conducting operations of scouting and blockading along the Oriente Province, Jamaica island, and Haiti. In the waters north of Jamaica island, was an American aircraft carrier with several medium and small warships. The US is transferring troops, weapons, and tanks to Guantanamo via warships.

Between the 30th and the 31st of October, when the UN general secretary U Thant visited Cuba, American warships were 500 kilometers off the Cuban coast with reduced activities of warships and airplanes. After U Thant left Cuba, American warships advanced to the waters 200 kilometers from Cuba or even closer. Besides blockading, [they] also conducted scouting, intercepting (with radio and radar) with increased activities of warships and airplanes.

The American U-2, shot down last week, is in the area near Nipe, Oriente Province.

Now Cuba is planning to establish frontline headquarters (not based in Havana). Most chiefs [of departments] of the general staff [are expected to] go to the front line, while second-to-chiefs or deputy chiefs will chair routine works.

Military Attaché of the Embassy in Cuba
2 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-09, pp.7-8. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.27

Chinese Embassy, Havana, "The Reactions of Cuban Society to Fidel Castro's Address," 2 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

A continuing report [on Castro's televised address on 1 November],

Reactions to Castro's address on the 1st [of November]:

According to the mayor of Havana, the salient point of Fidel's address is that [Cuba] will not trade for peace by making concessions to imperialism. Cuba is willing to negotiate, but it will not sacrifice its people's interests.

A [teaching] instructor at the Embassy observed that Fidel is a man of dignity. He is a great leader, braver than Khrushchev. Khrushchev allowed the UN to send personnel to supervise [the removal of the Soviet missiles] and the Red Cross to investigate. But Castro said no, with an extremely resolute attitude. Cuba is not commanded by the Soviet Union; it is commanded by the Cuban people. Soviet support, also acknowledged by Fidel, is crucial. Had [Anastas] Mikoyan's visit preceded Fidel's address, Mikoyan would have become very unpopular [with the Cubans]. Now it is good because Fidel has made it clear.

2) On withdrawing bases:

As the mayor of Havana claimed, the difficult moment is a good test for friendship with, and support for Cuba [by other countries].

One writer maintained that Soviet Union not only has committed a mistake on the Yugoslavia problem, but it did

too on the Cuba problem. Khrushchev worked at the command of Kennedy.

3) Reactions towards China's support:

As the mayor of Havana said, from [the moment of] the Cuban revolution succeeding until now, China has consistently supported Cuba. This help is unselfish. Just like what [Ernesto "Che"] Guevara said, China sacrificed itself to help Cuba.

The head of one department of the President's compound said, "Not just now, I said it a long time ago that [I] am for Mao Zedong."

4) On war preparation:

A director from the education ministry said, "The major target of this mobilization of war preparation is militias and government officials. But middle school students are also required to participate, on which the education ministry has made a lot of efforts."

A composer said, "The literature and art front of Cuba is normally filled by endless arguments and disagreements, but facing a possible American invasion, it is now in an unprecedented solidarity and unity. Many writers, poets, painters, and musicians, all go deep to the front to boost the spirit of troops."

Embassy in Cuba
2 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-07, pp.9-10. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian]



Document No.28

Chinese Embassy to the Soviet Union, Information on the report delivered by Maj. Boris Gelibusiji from the defense department of the Soviet Union in the Moscow Engineering and Physics College, 2 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

On the 30th of October, in the Moscow Engineering and Physics College, a report of current events was delivered. The reporter was Maj. Boris Gelibusiji [sic] from the Defense Ministry of the Soviet Union. When it came to the Sino-Indian border problem, the reporter said, "The Sino-

Indian border has never been demarcated. Prior to 1961, the position adopted by the Chinese government was wrong. For China, with a large population, wanted more territory, we [therefore] supported India. Now some changes have occurred in the policy of Chinese government, so we now support China." When our exchange students expressed their disagreement to the way the reporter spoke of [the situation], [the reporter] added, "In the associated meeting of socialist countries, all nations condemned China." He continued, "It is wrong to terminate the trading between China and India. Could China's present policy be wiser, like the attitude the Soviet government adopted towards the Cuba problem, i.e., avoiding war?" With reference to the reporter twisting our country's policy, our exchange students lodged a protest to the party secretary of the college.

Besides, when it came to the Cuban problem, the reporter said, "The major reason behind the US blockade was that Cuba's possession of aggressive weapons posed a threat to the US. The Soviet Union declared that the weapons were in the hands of Soviet officers and would be withdrawn. By doing this, [the Soviet Union] took hold of the trump card of the US on this problem." [The reporter] added, "The benefit of associating the Cuba problem with [US] military bases in Turkey is that it would compel the US to ponder this point, and therefore remove Turkey's threat to the Soviet Union."

When it came to the Albania problem, the reporter said, "Albania originally wanted to form an alliance with Italy, but it was rejected. The difficulties they are facing are mounting. Many have now changed their views towards the Soviet Union, except [Albanian Premier Mehmet] Shehu who remains stubborn."

Embassy to the Soviet Union
2 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-02, pp.5-6. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.29

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Report of the Conversation between Charge d'Affaires Huang Wenyou and Severo Aguirre del Cristo, Member of the National Leadership Committee of Cuban Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, 5 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

Severo Aguirre [del Cristo], member of the national leadership committee of Cuban Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, told comrade Huang Wenyou on 2 November, "Cuba's party and government are determined to defend [Cuba's] sovereignty and independence at any cost, including sacrificing one's own life. The five demands raised by Fidel [Castro] are minimum ones. To realize them, we shall rely, above all, on our own determination and resolve, then on international support, for our own force alone is not enough and we need people to stand behind us."

Embassy in Cuba
5 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, p. 21. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.30

Chinese Foreign Ministry Instruction to Diplomatic Posts on How to Express Attitude in Response to Khrushchev's Letters, 5 November 1962

Embassy in Yugoslavia along with all other embassies and consulates,

[We] have received the two cables, respectively sent on 29 October [1962] and 1 November [1962].

In our external activities, when asked for opinions towards two letters from [Nikita] Khrushchev, respectively on 27 October and 28 October, to [John F.] Kennedy, don't directly indicate the attitude. [You] could refer to our government statement on 25 October, Comrade Peng Zhen's speech on 28 October ([in] *Renmin Ribao*, 29 [October]), the note from Foreign Minister Chen [Yi] to the Cuban chargé d'affaires in China (in *Renmin Ribao*, 2 November), the spirit of the two editorials of *Renmin Ribao*, respectively 31 October and 5 November. Positively indicate our position of firmly supporting Cuba's struggle.

Foreign Ministry
5 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00601-05, pp.9-10. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.31

Foreign Ministry Instruction on How to Express Positions Regarding the Cuba-Soviet Relationship, 6 November 1962

Special Urgency

Embassy in Cuba along with all other embassies and consulates,

[We] have received the cable sent on 2 [November] regarding the external position on the question of supporting Cuba's struggle. In general, your ideas are approved. You could refer to the note from Foreign Minister Chen [Yi] to the Cuban chargé d'affaires in China, our government's statement on 25 October, etc., to positively indicate our position of supporting [Fidel] Castro's speech on the night of 1 [November]. With respect to the Cuban-Soviet relationship, [you] should not speak but listen [*zhiting bushuo*].

Foreign Ministry

6 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00601-05, p.5. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.32

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, Report on the Experience of the Soviet National Day Reception, 8 November 1962

Urgent

Foreign Ministry,

A brief report of what [we] heard from yesterday's Soviet national day reception is as follows:

1) Judging from the conversation between Cuban leaders and [Anastas] Mikoyan, [their] relationship remains strained. Mikoyan proposed a toast, "Khrushchev said, 'In our grandsons' generation, the US will be socialist.' I say, our sons' generation will be." Fidel [Castro] replied, "No matter which

generation, in a nutshell, [the US] will become socialist." The Soviet ambassador [Aleksandr Alekseyev] suggested a toast to a notable power, [Emilio] Aragonés' party, which was answered back by Raúl [Castro], "This has nothing to do with Aragonés." Mikoyan said, "The party of Cuba is an interesting party. It's the only [party] in the world in which the old and the new are married to each other, being more than a simple mingling but a fusion. It [therefore] has more vitality, and [set] an example for Latin America." [Mikoyan] added, "You should work hard, otherwise we will criticize [you]." Raúl responded, "We [follow the] Leninist approach of party-building: not only do [we] listen to party members, [we] also listen to the masses of workers and farmers." Mikoyan said, "What I meant was criticisms between fraternal parties, friendly and comradely, in order to remove shortcomings."

2) [Ernesto "Che"] Guevara told Charge d'Affaires Huang that it was busy now and that at this moment [they] always had to grind their machetes for sugarcane-cutting. [Guevara] requested the charge d'affaires bring back the Ambassador [Shen Jian] earlier [from China], for there were lots of things to do. Fidel's aide, Maj. Aisikaluona [sic] told us, "Chairman Mao is not only the leader of the Chinese people, he is also the leader of all oppressed peoples in the world. Let Chinese brothers and sisters know that if it emerges that Cuba has to fight alone, it will fight US aggression firmly to the end. Now there are people who describe a country, which has merely striven to defend itself, as a warmonger, because we did not approve people who violate Marxist-Leninist principles. Weapons all could be manipulated, but individuals with pride could not be manipulated."

3) After the president and prime minister left, Mikoyan spoke to Raúl [Castro], "There are always some disagreements [between socialist countries], like between brothers or between husband and wife, which are family affairs with solidarity being the basic." [Mikoyan] then initiated a toast to solidarity. [Emilio] Aragonés was also present, but kept silent. Mikoyan gave a good many compliments to Vilma [Espin] (wife of Raúl). It appeared that they had worked hard on Mr. and Mrs. Castro.

Towards us all walks of the Cuban society were cordial and friendly. [They] thanked [us] for our country's great support, yet with no exception did not touch on the topic of the Cuban-Soviet meeting.

Embassy in Cuba
8 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00601-05, pp.11-12. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.33

Chinese Embassy in Cuba Investigation Group, Guevara's Mother Talked About the Soviet-Cuban Relationship, 8 November 1962

Central Investigation Department,

Guevara's mother [Celia de la Serna y Llosa], Madam Moke [sic], and Abraham Guillén [a Marxist author], three people visited our embassy at their initiative. After studying [the situation], [we] decided to designate Comrade Xiong You [...] [sic] to meet on our behalf. As to the content of the conversation, in accordance with the instruction of the Foreign Ministry, [Xiong] did not speak but only listened regarding the Soviet-Cuban conflict.

According to Guevara's mother, [...] [sic] the leader of the Argentine national liberation movement [sic, sentence unclear], prior to [this conversation], we had met her twice by chance at Madam Moke's (details of which had been reported separately). When this time we came to the topic of supporting Cuba in defending its sovereignty, Guevara's mother spoke darkly, "I'm afraid Cuba is collapsing."

Madam Moke talked to Guevara on the night of 6 [November]. She said that [she] tried persuading Guevara to talk to Chinese comrades. Guevara replied, "[The situation] now is intense. Mikoyan is here. I have no time to see Chinese comrades. Between the Chinese comrades and us there is no conflict." Madam Moke also suggested that the Chinese comrades ought to look for Guevara and talk. [She] even mentioned that the blow to Guevara this time is considerable, to which we gave no comment.

Abraham claimed to be born in Spain, had participated in the Spanish civil war, [...] [sic] to be a military expert and economist, with works such as *Imperialism of the Dollar* [and the *Direct Inversions-Appendix*], and *The Agony of Imperialism*. [He said to] give one copy of each to Chairman Mao. At the invitation of Cuban government [he] came in secrecy to Cuba to work as the staff of an Argentine secret academy which now has over 40 students. Abraham claimed to be a non-party Marxist-Leninist and a Maoist; China, [he said,] was his second homeland. In the conversation, he appeared to hate Khrushchev bitterly, holding that Khrushchev was afraid of war, not allowing Latin American people to wage revolution and saying that Khrushchev had thrown [Fidel] Castro into

a river and drowned him. Marxist-Leninists should open a military revolution in Latin America and save Cuba. [He] also gave us a copy of their detailed plan to open military struggle in Argentina, which [was supposed to] symbolize their trust in Chinese comrades and wish for cooperation. In the conversation, [he] profusely praised Chairman Mao, saying that Chairman Mao was the leader of all oppressed peoples in the world, and that their plan was devised in accordance with the spirit of Chairman Mao's thought. [Abraham] wished China to accelerate the research on the hydrogen bomb, [saying that only by this would] world peace could be guaranteed and etc. Judging from the outcomes of this contact, Abraham is under the leadership of Madam Moke.

Regarding what issues should receive attention in future contacts, please instruct.

Investigative Group of Embassy in Cuba
8 November 1962

CC: Foreign Ministry, Investigation Department

Comment by Kong Yuan:
Please let Foreign Ministry read [this cable]

Cable Received by Machine
0356 Central Investigation Department

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00601-02, pp.3-4. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.34

Chinese Embassy in Havana, A Brief Report of a Cuban Military Intelligence Official's Talk, 8 November 1962

Foreign Ministry and Military Intelligence Department,

According to Yitulinuo [transliteration], head of the second division of Cuban military intelligence department, the situation has been calm from the 4th of this month until now. Two American aircraft carriers, once deployed near Cuba, have now reached the waters relatively distant from Cuba in the Gulf of Mexico. Although American airplanes continue scouting, surveillance, and intruding into [Cuban] territorial airspace along the Cuban coast, it has become less frequent. Today air intrusion has reached 23 sorties (including U-2), [but] yesterday's was more than today's.

Military Attaché of Embassy in Cuba
8 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-09,
p.9. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.35

Chinese Embassy in Iraq, Report on Mercenaries Used by
United States to Invade Cuba, 9 November 1962

Military Intelligence Department,

According to the third secretary of the Cuban [Embassy], mercenaries used by the US to invade Cuba are mainly recruited from Cuban counter-revolutionaries; [the US] also enlisted some ordinary refugees and counter-revolutionaries from other Latin American countries. These mercenaries, unified under the command of the American Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], are divided into two groups. One group is the regular army, which, stationed in Florida, the US, is commanded and trained by American troops. They are armed with light weapons and wear uniforms with a badge on their chest which reads, "C.R.C.", referring to the "Cuban Revolutionary Council." This army has some 15,000 men, with a backbone of between 3,000 to 4,000 people, including American commanders, all speaking Spanish. The other group is special agents committed to sabotage and subversion operations. It has many organizations, not unified yet; the major one is "Ai'er fama" [sic]. They were dispatched to different states of the US, received different training, and then [were] sent to West Germany, Japan, and Latin American countries, to engage in various professions there. [They are expected to] exploit appropriate situations, in the disguise of refugees, infiltrate into Cuba to conduct operations as special agents. [On top of these two groups,] there is another group of people, based in the US, assaulting and harassing Cuba's coastal cities from the high sea, and conducting sabotage.

Military Attaché of Embassy in Iraq
9 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-09.
Translated for CWIHP from Chinese by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.36

Chinese Embassy to the Soviet Union, A Report of the
Speech Given By the Chief Editor of the Soviet Weekly *Za
Rubezhom*, 10 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

According to our overseas students, on the 31st of October, the chief editor of the Soviet weekly, *Za Rubezhom* delivered a report on current events in the Moscow Agriculture College. Regarding the Cuba problem and the Sino-Indian border problem, he expressed the following views:

When speaking of the Cuba problem, he did not try advertising the wisdom of the Soviet policy. Instead, he began by reminding the audience, "The situation remains grave; the Cuban crisis has yet to pass away." [He] quoted information from Western news agencies, saying "that the primary task of the West is to eliminate the [Fidel] Castro regime, to eliminate Castro and aggressive weapons altogether so as to curb the communist influence on [Latin] America." The reporter claimed, "Although a contribution has been made on our part, Western countries did not budge accordingly. They treated our activities as the projection of weakness. Now Washington is having celebratory parties, to congratulate their victory and to praise Kennedy's wisdom and resolve. [Harry] Truman, this imperialist of the old brand, also took the opportunity and stepped out of the dark, saying that to the Russians [the US] ought to be tough. Once being threatened, they [the Russians] are bound to back down. On the West Berlin problem, too, [the US] should be tough." The reporter rarely expressed his own opinion. [He] mainly introduced the situation of the Cuban crisis by referring to a plethora of news from foreign news agencies, and requested the audience to keep a close eye on the further development.

Regarding the Sino-India border, he commented, "The Sino-Indian border incident is not in the interests of world peace, nor was it expected by both countries [Indian and China]. Imperialism wants to exploit it. China is a socialist country and India is a capitalist one. India looked to the US for military aid which has already been promised by the US" He added, "Interestingly, in earlier years in the Senate, [John F.] Kennedy already said that to contain the communist movement in Asia, India will play a significant role." The reporter also referred to the declaration made by China on 24 October—China raised its proposals but the Indian government turned them down—[he] quoted a paragraph from a Vietnamese newspaper and expressed the wish that the Sino-Indian border problem could be peacefully resolved.

Embassy to the Soviet Union
10 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-03, pp.7-8. Translated for CWIHP from Chinese by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.37

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Report of the Conversation with the Deputy Editor of *[Noticias de Hoy]*, [Raúl Valdes] Vivo, 12 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

According to Vivo, the deputy editor of *Hoy*, the possibility of Paraguay severing diplomatic relations with Cuba is higher than that of Chile [severing relations with Cuba]. [If both are going to sever relationships with Cuba,] Chile may do so earlier than Paraguay; Paraguay won't sever the relationship before the general election. The rightist Peronist [government] of Argentina also opposes Cuba.

The present threat to Cuba has become less imminent, but remains. The US now wants to invade Cuba via the Organization of American States. Recently, two Argentine warships and two Dominican [Republic] warships, along with three thousand Argentine soldiers, arrived in Panama.

It is difficult for the US to maintain the naval blockade. [But] it wants to intensify the economic blockade and to make ships from capitalist countries not go to Cuba. The present number of vessels coming to Cuba is less than before. This problem is going to become worse during sugar season.

The [North] Vietnamese ambassador holds that the reason for the leaders of Latin American fraternal parties, who were previously in Cuba, to return home at the Soviet Union announcement of withdrawing missile bases, is mainly to pacify those confused minds within their parties as well as countries.

Embassy in Cuba
12 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, p.26. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.38

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Report of the Conversation between Chargé d'Affaires Huang Wenyou, and Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Pelegrin Torras, 13 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

Chargé d'Affaires Huang [Wenyou] visited [Cuban] Deputy Foreign Minister Torras. The content of conversation is presented as follows:

On Cuba's situation. He said that Cuba's situation has yet to stabilize. In the UN, all sorts of proposals are under discussion (including ones from Latin American and Asia-African countries). One thing is critical, which is the coordinated and collective position of the Soviet Union and Cuba. This will place American imperialism in a political difficulty. We [i.e. the Cubans] know that imperialism will not abandon its aggressive attempt, and [we] also understand that this struggle is a long-lasting one. We [i.e. Cubans] wish, via the discussion of various proposals and especially via the Soviet Union and Cuba adopting a shared position, to expose to the world the true attempt [of imperialism], even if [we] cannot make imperialism honor its promise. We believe that this is also a political victory over imperialism.

The Sino-Indian problem. He said that I [i.e., Torras], along with other [Cuban] leaders, have kept a close eye on it. With respect to the Sino-Indian conflict, we [Cubans] understand the proposals put forth by the Chinese government in the hope to peacefully solve the border problem, agreed that these proposals could serve as the basis of negotiation. What is regrettable is that the Indian government repeatedly turned them down. A continuation of the Sino-Indian border conflict will do no good for the Indian people; [it] will only serve Indian counterrevolutionaries and imperialism. The reason why Indian counterrevolutionaries are doing these [presumably referring to accusations against China for invading Indian territory] is to arouse a deviating nationalistic sentiment, and to split the Indian people's power. By doing so, [Indian leader Jawaharlal] Nehru is to gain his personal interests and the interests of the class he represents. I [i.e. Torras] speak of this as a comrade, because Cuba has diplomatic relationships with both countries. When expressing opinions as deputy Foreign Minister, [I] have to take into account the fact of Cuba having a relationship with India. When being

asked if Cuba has received the petition letter from Nehru, he said that the Cuban government hasn't.

Chargé d'Affaires Huang indicated that [China] feels grateful to Cuba which supports China's proposals in the aim to peacefully solve the Sino-Indian border conflict, and that we [i.e. China] understand Cuba's present situation.

Embassy in Cuba
13 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-05, pp.28-29. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.39

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, Report on Fidel Castro's letter to UN Secretary-General U Thant, 15 November 1962

Foreign Ministry,

This afternoon, Castro sent [UN Secretary-General] U Thant a letter, once again rejecting any country or international organization conducting inspections on Cuban territory and reiterating that the five points raised by Cuba are the basics. This letter reveals that the US recently continued sending airplanes into Cuban airspace, and indicates that Cuba has the right to retaliate by shooting. It firmly expresses that Cuba is determined to defend its sovereignty and rights, and will never beg for survival on its knees.

Embassy in Cuba
15 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-07, p.11. Translated for CWIHP from Chinese by ZHANG Qian.]



Document No.40

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, Report of Military Intelligence Department of Cuban General Staff's Talking about American Air Intrusion, 20 November 1962

Foreign Ministry and Military Intelligence Department,

On the morning of the 20th [of November] the head of the military intelligence department of the Cuban general staff [perhaps Pedro Luis Rodríguez—ed.] talked about [the following]:

From the 1st until the 15th of this month, American air intrusion reached 247 sorties. In some cases, [intruding] height was merely 2,000 meters. Often [American airplanes] traverse Cuba, either from east to west, or from south to north. After the publication of [Fidel] Castro's letter to [UN Secretary-General] U Thant on the 15th [of November], American air intrusion has apparently decreased, with only two or three sorties a day. At an altitude between ten thousand and twenty thousand [meters], [American airplanes] (mainly U-2) dare not go further and hide near Mariel Harbor, Pinar del Rio Province, conducting scouting. On the 19th [of November], an American F-8U intruded into San Diego's airspace but was driven away by anti-aircraft forces.

Guantanamo has now 15,000 American troops. No substantial change appears with respect to the maritime blockade. Argentina, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, have all sent warships to participate [in the blockade]. American naval maneuvers are mainly maintenance and supply operations.

The present concern is that American imperialism [will] invade [Cuba] with the Latin American puppet countries' troops and Cuban counter-revolutionary mercenaries, which will be politically beneficial to American imperialism.

Castro's two letters to U Thant are historical documents, standing for the Cuban people's current will and the firm position to defend revolution: as long as American planes make intrusions into [Cuba's] territorial air [space], [Cuban people] will shoot them down. Today, Americans could claim that missiles and bombers are aggressive weapons; tomorrow, they too could say that cannons, even submachine guns, are aggressive weapons. Cuban people improve quickly in terms of their understanding, capable of identifying the right from the wrong; it is not missiles that American imperialism fears; it is the Cuban revolutionary model that [it] fears.

He is very concerned about the Sino-Indian border problem. He said that this time once again, [Indian leader Jawaharlal] Nehru's mask of peace and neutrality was stripped off. Like [Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel] Nasser, the lips say one thing, while the heart thinks another.

On the 14th of November, the Cuban armed force sent an instruction, requiring that troops and civilians all keep military secrets. It is now conducting education via papers, magazines, television stations, and radios.

Military Attaché of Embassy in Cuba
20 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00342-09, pp.11-12. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.41

Chinese Embassy in Cuba, A Brief Report of the Conversation with a Cuban Artillery Commander, 22 November 1962

Foreign Ministry and Military Intelligence Department,

On the 21st [of November], a Cuban artillery commander expressed [his opinions as follows]: [John] Kennedy could not be trusted: now he demanded the Soviet Union remove [IL-28] bombers; later he will perhaps invade [Cuba] right away, or perhaps invade with an army knocked together with mercenaries and [soldiers from] puppet countries. On one hand, our side should continue preparing, on the other hand, [we] should beware of constructing defenses secretly ([he] referred to secrecy and camouflage). On the 19th and 20th [of November], [we] conducted shooting at invading US naval airplanes. Because national defense needs to be strengthened, industry development is accordingly going to be slowed down. With respect to Sino-Indian border conflict, he believed that [the conflict] was created by [Jawaharlal] Nehru, whereas Indian people were still good.

Military attaché office of embassy in Cuba
22 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00342-05, p. 34. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.42

Chinese Foreign Ministry, Reply to Chinese Embassy in Havana Regarding the Visit of Ernesto “Che” Guevara’s Mother, 27 November 1962
Embassy in Cuba,

The cable sent on 8 November was received. Things informed by Guevara’s mother, et al., deserve our attention. After Ambassador Shen [Jian] returned to the embassy, [we] could continue to visit Cuban leaders, conduct discussions, with reference to the spirit of the homeland’s policies, and listen to

their reactions earnestly. Please bring the materials, the ones handed to you by Abraham [Guillén], to the country, ASAP. When dealing with Guevara’s mother, et al., [you] should still listen more while speaking less [*duoting shaoshuo*].

Investigation Department of Foreign Ministry
27 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No.111-00601-02, p.8. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.43

Chinese Embassy in Havana, Memorandum of Conversation between Shen Jian, China’s Ambassador to Cuba, and Raúl Roa García, Cuba’s Foreign Minister, 30 November 1962

Shen: When I was about to return to China from Cuba, you asked me to bring back the fourth volume of *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong*. This is what I bring from Beijing.

Roa: Thank you very much. This is a generous gift. Many comrades will envy me because of it.

Shen: This is a copy of the statement issued by our government on 30 November in support of the IRO [Integrated Revolutionary Organizations] and the statement of the council of ministers. The master copy hasn’t arrived yet though.

Roa: Thank you. I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of our government, to thank the Chinese people. The Chinese government, at the difficult moment of a possible imminent invasion, expressed support to Cuba, in particular, the support for the Five Demands, for our activities at the UN, and for our position adopted in the negotiation in the US. We want to take this opportunity to tell Comrade Ambassador, which Comrade Ambassador may probably have already known, that we have proposed a draft of trilateral parties which stipulates three countries’ duties and also includes our Five Demands. Without spending more words, as Comrade Ambassador is bound to know, the US will not accept it.

Besides, we also expressed that we agree to multiple inspections, including the one from the US. But this is in line with the overall solution to the Caribbean Crisis; in other words, the [US] has to accept Cuba’s Five Demands. This is the current situation. It’s likely, or almost certain, that Cuba will

issue a statement by itself [i.e., and not jointly with the US and Soviet Union—ed.]. The reason for it is that the development of the situation leaves Cuba with no other choices. This independent statement will express our point of view and our assessment of the crisis from the beginning to the end; will point out that the only solution to the Caribbean Crisis is to accept Cuba's Five Demands; [and] will also point out that although war is temporarily avoided, peace is not achieved since the US is still implementing its aggressive policies; Cuba is ready to participate in all sorts of negotiations, but it will not sell its sovereignty, or yield, nor will it agree to any solution that would damage its sovereignty. We hold that peace could not be achieved by handing over our power; [we] must stand up to aggressors with dignity and be firm. We said many times that Cuba would not fail. The fact of this period proves that Cuba, indeed, did not fail. This is the brief report of the current situation and the prospect for the Security Council due in the early next week.

Shen: It is on 17 October that I left Havana. On my arrival in Beijing, the situation in Cuba became tense. Being absent at the most tense moment of the situation in Cuba is a regret. But a redeeming feature is to see how our government, party, and people spared no efforts in supporting Cuba: we adopted the Marxist-Leninist approach. We noticed that the Cuban people in difficulty were so united that they resembled one person, uniting around the leadership with Premier Fidel [Castro] as the head. Our government issued statements several times in support of Cuba, and people voluntarily rallied in both cities and villages, demonstrated and assembled. In Beijing alone, demonstrations lasted four days, from dawn until dark, [occurring] in front of the Cuban embassy with one million participants. Over those days, the comrades of your embassy, especially the chargé d'affaires, Comrade Bide Luosuo [sic], chanted slogans and condemned US imperialism. I bring a documentary film this time and you could watch it when [you are] free. We are prepared to give as a present one [such film] to the Cuban government. We believe that Cuba has made great achievements in this struggle. Cuba's struggle is not just for Cuba, but also for the Latin American people and for the people of the world. This struggle proves that a people, or a nation, could defend its sovereignty or dignity only by relying on its own strength. I have been away from Cuba for one month, during which [I] was receiving news only from papers. There are many things I don't know. Perhaps [I] will ask you to talk about them sometime.

Roa: All right, when I get rid of the busy tasks here. You know, over these days, apart from our soldiers and our people, this department is the center of all these tasks. Perhaps I shall

go to your embassy sometime, or invite you to come to my home for a quiet talk. In this period, there are many extraordinarily interesting things to do.

Shen: Yes. The struggle of the Cuban people is very complex, in which there is not only the problem of imperialism; there is also a problem of another aspect.

Roa: Yes, very complex. The experience we acquired from this struggle is: when the people of a country faces a grave danger, if it could put up a sturdy fight against aggressors and dare to pay whatever cost, this people will win sooner or later. This is how Comrade Fidel told us. In order to [achieve] victory and stick to principles, [one] has to prepare for all sorts of sacrifices. When you are ready as such, you will be victorious. It is true, indeed. Now our people's awareness becomes higher. [They] band with each other more closely, with firmer resolve and clearer vision. Not only is revolutionary Cuba saved, its prestige is also increased. The truth is: none of these atomic bombs, whatever their sorts are, is able to affect the Cuban island or the Cuban revolution. This is our experience. As Comrade Ambassador must know, Fidel said in his speech that although missiles were withdrawn [from Cuba], our moral missile will never ever be withdrawn.

Shen: Nobody could ever move such missiles. The strategic weapon of the Cuban people is the people themselves.

Roa: Indeed it is true. Naturally when it comes to these problems, more time will be needed [for discussion]. I prefer to talk to you at another opportunity. Now I would like to briefly tell you that over this period, our people behaved extraordinarily well, very calmly. Nobody was afraid. Unlike some European countries, there was no event, such as panic buying of fuel or bread.

When [UN Secretary-General] U Thant arrived, I went to meet him at the airport, and came back with him via downtown. He said that he was surprised at [seeing] such a calm communist life on our streets. He told me that the people's calmness and sufficient supply really surprised him and that our people's behavior was truly moving. In those days, the presence of Western ambassadors could barely be noticed at the foreign ministry; it was them, the only [group of] people, who rushed to buy food. But the day after Fidel's television speech, the Italian ambassador came to see me, [saying] that [he] had no other important things, which was apparently an excuse. He told me, "I am already an old person. [I] have seen many things in the world. Few things could now still move

me. But I did shed tears when Fidel was giving his speech last night. The Cuban people's behavior is a good lesson for me, and also a fine example. This speech of mine is, diplomatically, of no value; it's entirely a statement of individual opinion." You see, even an ambassador from a country that has conflicting interests with us is also moved [by us].

Shen: I bring some materials and maps concerning the Sino-Indian border problem. I want to present you briefly this problem.

Roa: Good. We have kept a close eye on this issue, and conducted several discussions. I also read the letter, delivered by your embassy, from Premier Zhou Enlai to Asian-African countries. It was well written, giving a comprehensive and detailed presentation of the Sino-Indian border problem

Shen: (presented briefly the course of the Sino-Indian border problem in accordance with Premier Zhou Enlai's letter to Asian-African country leaders.)

Our general policy towards the Sino-Indian border problem is: our people's main enemy is US imperialism, rather than reactionary Indian nationalism. We advocate solving the Sino-Indian problem by peaceful and friendly negotiations. But we both had the experience that when facing capitalists [we] should not always make concessions; sometimes, necessary struggle should be conducted. We fought back, at the moment [we] were [imposed with] the unbearable and [left with] nowhere to retreat [*remwukeren, tuiwuketui*]. We wish that Asian-African friendly countries will exert influence and prompt [Jawaharlal] Nehru to go back to the negotiation table.

Roa: I want to ask Comrade Ambassador: what is the prospect of a Sino-Indian meeting?

Shen: From our part, we wish to negotiate.

Roa: I meant that from the Indian part, how is the possibility [of the Sino-Indian negotiation]?

Shen: This issue is complex. It depends on how the Indians will act, and also on the imperialist attitude.

Roa: Yes, this issue is complex. Behind Nehru, there are imperialists, in particular, US imperialists, and also British imperialists, which obviously complicates the issue.

Shen: The fact that imperialist countries and capitalist countries support Nehru does not surprise us. But there are some fraternal countries saying that Nehru is peace-loving. Nehru sent troops to attack us; Nehru is the representative of the big capitalist class; Nehru colluded closely with imperialism. How can he be described as a peace-loving person? They, at the point of [a] socialist country having conflict with [a] reactionary nationalist country, adopted an incorrect position. The fundamental problem is that [they did not] evaluate Nehru in terms of the class interests that Nehru represents. Comrade Minister [certainly] knows well this point, [since] you have conducted face-to-face struggle with Nehru.

Roa: Yes, Nehru is by no means a peace-loving person. From a long time ago, he has begun to play a reactionary role. From a long time ago, he has turned to imperialism. Just as Comrade Ambassador said, view him in terms of the interests he represents. Personally, I have never trusted him. He is a man of hypocrisy, pretense, and braggadocio. He is self-convinced that he speaks better English than George Williamson [transliteration; not further identified]. True, [he] does speak better English than Williamson, because he also speaks the political language of imperialism.

Shen: We know that the fraternal country Cuba is backing us on the Sino-Indian border problem.

Roa: We are very concerned with this problem. I will forward these materials and maps to the comrades of the Socialist Country Division and Asian Research Division who study this problem. To let them further the study and discussion on this problem [now] does not mean that they were wrong. The assessment of this problem has never been wrong. But in the past, [they] were devoid of tools, such as maps, which help [people] gain straight-forward information from knowledge and impression from maps.

Embassy in Cuba
30 November 1962

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive: No. 111-00361-04, pp.1-6. Translated for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]



Document No.44

Memorandum of Conversation between Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Chinese Ambassador Shen Jian, Havana, 1 December 1962

Guevara: (on sitting down) please forgive what I said in our last conversation, the one taking place [on 13 October 1962] just before you returned to China.

Ambassador Shen: What happened in Cuba was a bad thing, which, however, could also turn into a good one. The Cuban people and the Cuban leadership have insisted upon a correct position, and carried out victorious struggle. Not only is it a good experience from the standpoint of the Cuban people, but also it provides the world as a whole a valuable experiment which gives it global significance.

Guevara: [The evaluation of this incident] should be carried out in close connection to Latin America. Indeed, to Latin America, it is genuinely a defeat. We are facing a grim situation in which some countries are going to shift their attitudes towards us. Although we were very careful when we expressed our disagreement with the Soviet Union, some countries have initiated corresponding economic measures. We have been determined, even if we were to be pulverized by nuclear bombs; after all, our lives are God-given. In Bulgaria, we had a very interesting discussion with brother parties. Comrade [Blas] Roca explained to Latin American fraternal parties the reasons behind Cuba's position. Representatives of a few fraternal parties—[I] don't know what countries exactly they were from—responded by saying that the overarching priority should have been to preserve peace. One of them even said: We are more concerned with Cuba's honor than with Cuba's statement. Venezuela did not turn up because they disagree with our position, but Uruguayan party representatives did take a conciliatory position. Anyhow, the rest are very bad. Perhaps this defeat could lead to victory in the future, yet the division [among Latin American communist parties], the division within the progressive movement, is inevitable. This would check the growth of people's power, or reduce it.

Ambassador Shen: This division at the moment, again, is a good thing as well as a bad thing. In fact, it is natural for Marxist-Leninist party members to stand up to some party leaders who subscribe themselves to Revisionism. This division between the Marxist-Leninist communists and the revisionist communists is to be expected. Consider the time when the Second International, after the death of Marx and Engels, found its way to Revisionism. At this moment, the

disagreement between Marxist-Leninist communist parties and revisionist ones became an explicit division. Lenin, however, adhering to Marxism-Leninism, took over the people's revolution and in the end united all communist parties under the Third International. Cuba's revolutionary acts have been a great contribution to the enlargement of the global Marxist-Leninist camp.

Guevara: This is true. But that division also restricts the development of people's power. Instead of promoting and facilitating revolution, some parties were effectively suppressing it. When they were doing so, they even cited terms such as peace, the leading power of the socialist bloc. Do you remember that in our last conversation, I told you that there was something I could not understand[?]*—that is because I was so deeply convinced by what Soviet top leaders told me (continuing eating).*

Guevara: Among the people who supported the Cuban revolution, some did so only because they thought the Cuban revolution was a nationalist movement. So soon after we declared that we were Marxist-Leninists, they wavered, and after the withdrawal of Soviet missiles they vowed to initiate their own revolution which, in their vocabulary, basically means the abandonment of the proletarian revolution. However, these people actually could be won over by a determined Leftist force.

Shen: Better to see these people [i.e., the Soviets] having removed their disguise earlier. Even without that operation of the Soviet Union, there are still people, in America or the world as a whole, who don't necessarily carry out the revolution in the interests of the proletariat. In the circumstance when there is disarray and people don't see clearly, the Leftists should act and raise their distinct flag. Otherwise, our [socialist] camp would fall into disarray.

Guevara: Before, facing the American aggression, we had firm support from the world. Not only did the world in general stand firmly behind us, but also Latin America in particular offered unwavering support. The Soviet Union even promised to help us with missiles. But now the Soviet missiles are gone and our international prestige weakened.

Shen: This is, however, a great exposure of the revisionists.
Guevara: Some revisionist countries remain unexposed.

Shen: Did the Soviet missiles come to Cuba as a result of the negotiations you and Comrade [Emilio] Aragonés had in Moscow [in late August/early September 1962]?

Guevara: They [the Soviets] proposed it [i.e. the deployment of missiles in Cuba]. We went to Moscow only to discuss the details of this proposal. Our side said that we don't have this sort of need. Yet on second thought, we felt guilty given the fact that such a radical proposal might actually drag them [the Soviet Union] into war whereas we remained undecided on whether we should provide them with missile bases. We accepted their proposal only in the hope of helping them [the Soviets]. We suggested the Soviet Union issue with Cuba a joint statement condemning the US, and publicizing their support to us. They said this was unnecessary and what Kennedy had done was merely orchestrated to win the presidential [i.e., mid-term Congressional] election. Still we felt that the equivocal promise was dangerous, particularly because it did not touch on the extent of the Soviet aid to Cuba. They can change, and they did. Later they kept blathering, for example, that they would send their Baltic Fleet. They also told us that they preferred actions to hollow statements, and that the mighty Soviet Union would deliver a destructive strike upon anyone who dared to invade Cuba, etc. At the time we believed their words were true.

Shen: I remember I asked you in our last conversation wondering if a possible American invasion would inevitably provoke another world war. In other words, I was asking if the Soviet Union would support Cuba with its missiles. The reason why I asked such a question was that I'm quite suspicious [about the promise of the Soviet Union].

Guevara: Now they have left. Though they promised to continue their support, only the naïve would keep buying their empty words. The treaty between Cuba and the Soviet Union, which has never been publicized, has been violated by the Soviet Union, and became ineffective.

Shen: Did the Soviet government consult with you and obtain your approval before they withdrew their missiles?

Guevara: They did at the beginning, but ceased when Khrushchev made a promise to the Americans. Fidel had written a letter to Khrushchev, bidding Khrushchev farewell. Because the Americans were expected to attack us the next day, the letter was not short of agitated words. This is probably why Khrushchev, in his reply to Fidel, said he could tell anxiety from Fidel's text. The Soviet Union withdrew their missiles on the grounds that they did not wish to feed the US

with an excuse for war. This is itself an excuse. In his secret letter to Kennedy, Khrushchev had already made a promise to the Americans that the Soviet Union would back down. On hearing this decision, some Soviet military specialists burst into tears.

Shen: China had a similar experience earlier. It took merely one month from the moment of the Soviet Union deciding on withdrawing all of their experts [18 July 1960], to the point of the last Soviet specialist leaving China. We proposed that some of them stay until contracts were fully implemented. The Soviet Union withdrew them anyhow. When they were being withdrawn, some Soviet experts cried too. Admittedly, the sudden departure of so many experts caused some difficulties in our economy. But it, again, encouraged us to rely on our own strength in resolving problems.

Other than missiles and IL-28 [medium-range bombers], what else had the Soviet Union left with? Were surface-to-air missiles also withdrawn? Are they in Soviet hands?

Guevara: [The Soviet Union] took away the missiles and IL-28s. Some tactical weapons have been transferred to us and our personnel will be trained to operate them. Yet surface-to-air missiles are in their hands. Now we could not shoot any invading American planes because we don't control any anti-aircraft missiles. But these surface-to-air missiles will not leave, they will stay.

Shen: In other words, only missiles and IL-28s have gone. Do the rest, including surface-to-air missiles and MiG-21 [jet fighters], stay?

Guevara: Yes, at least for the time being. They say [these weapons] will stay.

Shen: Are MiG-21s also in their hands?

Guevara: Yes. But they will stay and be operated by our own pilots.

Shen: What else will the Soviet Union take away? Will the fishing harbor be closed for maintenance [sic]?

Guevara: The fishing harbor won't. But another harbor has already been closed.

Shen: Is it of military nature?

Guevara: Yes, in a word, fear [not clear in text what "fear" refers to—trans.].

Shen: What further concessions do you think will the Soviet Union make to the US?

Guevara: The biggest concession I could imagine is that the Soviet Union chooses not to support us when the Americans attack us. As to what political concessions would be, we don't know. Anyhow, it's just a discussion between you and me. Perhaps the biggest mistake Kennedy has ever committed is that he chose not to support mercenaries and directly attack us in La Batalla de Giron [Battle of Giron, i.e., the Bay of Pigs]. Our equipment then was no match for ours today.

Shen: How did [Anastas] Mikoyan feel about the result of the negotiation with Cuba? Is he satisfied? Was his mission in Cuba aimed at implementing [overall] Soviet policy?

Guevara: We have no idea of his mission's purpose. He has undergone a difficult period. His wife died during his stay in Cuba. One day he said he would leave immediately, but the next day he changed his mind saying that this was because a new government order arrived. In another case, he originally assured us that [the stay of] IL-28s would not be a problem, but some four or five days later, [he said that the] IL-28 bombers had to be removed [from Cuba]. I don't know what sort of policy this is. He also mentioned that he would not leave Cuba until the moment he completed his mission. But never had he said what the purpose of his mission here was, as I see it. Now, I'm asking you why they [also] left China with their missiles?

Shen: Never in China have Soviet missiles been deployed. Where did you get this idea?

Guevara: From Soviet officers.

Shen: As one frank comrade to another, I believe you have already noticed two formal notes from us to the Soviet Union, on avoiding nuclear proliferation. [In these two notes], [we] made clear that the Soviet Union would not, from 1959 onwards, provide us with any ordinary nuclear materials, let alone missiles.

Guevara: Did China once have nuclear warheads?

Shen: No. As for the classified things the Soviet Union has always refused to give us them. I tell you what, they didn't even give us certain key components of the MiG-21, which is why we cannot use our MiG-21s.

Guevara: Did they give [these] to India?

Shen: As Khrushchev promised, this December they will.

Guevara: Including these key components?

Shen: All of them. And it is Soviet helicopters that delivered Indian weaponry and troops to the Sino-Indian border.

Guevara: Was it in the past, or has it continued until now?

Shen: Until now. Be nasty to true Marxist-Leninists while being nice to enemies, imperialists, and the anti-revolutionary. This is their nature.

Guevara: Soviet policies are not policies of Khrushchev alone, but of many. When I was talking to Khrushchev, [Mikhail] Suslov also joined us. We were told that [Leonid] Brezhnev would visit Yugoslavia. We expressed no opinion. They said Tito attempted to foster a conciliatory position and he was now fighting against the Rightists within the party. They also said some bad things about Albania. The plain fact is, Suslov finally concluded, Yugoslavia has a population of between 17 million and 18 million people but Albania has only [slightly] more than one million.

Shen: Instead of adopting a Marxist-Leninist attitude to analyze [phenomena], [they] evaluate [them] in terms of the population. But China did not receive any better treatment, even though we have a population of 650 million.

Guevara: [They are people] of no principle. I believe that in the future they will treat us as roses that have become infected and stink. Or [they will label us] Trotskyists or anarchists. Has the Chinese economic situation improved?

Shen: (Speaking in accordance with the communiqué of the Tenth Plenary Session.) Have you been informed of the details of Mikoyan's negotiation with Kennedy and Rusk?

Guevara: No, not yet. Soviet action in the United Nations was weak. When Mikoyan visited me, I said, "Victory is victory; defeat is defeat. To call defeat a victory is just wrong." Mikoyan said, "The Americans will not dare to examine Soviet ships, because [they] are afraid." I laughed at his words. He then became infuriated.

Shen: Presumably this is why, as I saw from the television, he did not give you a hug on leaving.

Guevara: Personally, I do respect him. But is this important?

Shen: Any move on the Americans' part?

Guevara: No. They have not been willing to give any concrete guarantee. They [say] if there is no supervision, there will be no guarantee of non-invasion of Cuba. And the Soviets tend to go along [with this practice].

Shen: Cuba is surely having a difficult time. We fully understand because we have been through that before. But bear in mind, in the most difficult period of the past, you had only 12 persons and 7 guns. Yet in the end, you succeeded in toppling the US-imperialist-backed Batista regime and obtaining nation-wide victory. And now you are far stronger than before; the general international situation has, too, become better.

Guevara: We were determined: the enemy may wipe us out but as long as [we have] one man remaining, we will still kill them. Now it is still the same: the enemy can wipe us all out, but if there is one man left, we will still kill the Americans.

(After the meal)

Shen: (Having briefed on the Sino-Indian conflict.) Do you have any questions?

Guevara: Did the Communist Party of India (CPI) split after its statement of condemnation of the Chinese aggression?

Shen: It had already been divided before the publication of the statement. The CPI's central committee divided into three factions during the discussion of whether China should be condemned. The Leftists, who opposed following Nehru's policy and refused to condemn China, accounted for one third of the members. The Rightists, rallying behind the party leader [Shripad Amrit] Dange, accounted for another third. It was they who initiated this statement. The remaining one third were people sitting on the fence.

Guevara: [They are the] Nehru faction within the Party.

Shen: Many Leftists have been arrested. Some 500 Leftist party members have now been arrested.

Guevara: No rightists have been arrested?

Shen: Not [a single rightist].

Guevara: Pathetic. As to the people on the borderland [of China and India], do they tend to sympathize with China or are they influenced more by [Indian] chauvinism?

Shen: As far as people within our border are concerned, they are either Tibetan or belonging to ethnic groups that have kinship with the Tibetans. They believe in Lamaism. Slavery used to prevail in Tibet. In 1950, the People's Liberation Army liberated Tibet and initiated democratic reforms. Although the upper Tibetan slave owners rebelled in the first half of 1959, we squashed it quickly. Democratic reforms were furthered and became quicker and more thorough. A vast number of people began to support us. The influence of these democratic reforms on neighboring areas is considerable. Therefore, people are leaning towards our side, which is feared by Nehru.

Guevara: Perhaps this topic is somewhat distant [from the theme of our conversation]. Will the Xinjiang-Tibetan highway be connected to the one between China and Nepal?

Shen: No. (Points at the map.) This is the Xingjian-Tibetan highway. And that is the scheduled Sino-Nepalese highway. Do you have any other questions?

Guevara: Not now.

Shen: If, after you check the map and the materials, you still have questions, I'm happy to answer them. About your proposal of publishing a Spanish version of Peking Review, the homeland has already pondered the idea and will try to begin publication next March.

Guevara: This is important. (Starting to watch movie, "Protecting Cuba")

CC: permanent members of the Politburo, all comrades of the Secretariat, Biwu (DONG Biwu), HE Long, Boda (CHEN Boda), Fuzhi (XIE Fuzhi), KONG Yuan, FANG Yi, Central Secrecy Office, Foreign Liaison Office (4), Central Propaganda Office (2), Central Liaison Office (5), Central Investigation Office (4), Military Intelligence Office (2), Headquarters of the General Staff

CHEN, ZHANG, JI, ZENG, GENG, HUANG, MENG, QIAO, HAN, LIU, Admin Office of Foreign Ministry (3), Research Office, Division of the Soviet Union and Europe Office [of Foreign Ministry], American-Australian Office [of Foreign Ministry], Ambassador, Archive (3) --- Total copies (63)

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Document No.45

Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Document
Notification on the Situation of Cuba's Anti-American
Struggle, 4 December 1962

No. 652

Top Secret

Various central bureaus, party committees in various provinces, municipalities, and autonomous zones, and party working committee in Tibet; party leadership groups (party committee) at various central ministries, commissions, government agencies, and people's organizations, and the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army; leading members of embassies and other agencies abroad (via the Foreign Ministry and Central Committee Foreign Liaison Department):

The great victory our people have achieved in repulsing the Indian reactionaries and the great victory of the Cuban people's struggle against the US imperialists and their lackeys are the two most outstanding events in the international struggle at present. The two events happened simultaneously during the past month. The serious struggle during the past month has examined and tested various political forces in the world. The imperialists, reactionary nationalists, and modern revisionists have all fully exposed their true faces in front of the people of the whole world. The Marxist-Leninists and the revolutionary people in various countries have fully demonstrated their strength in the struggle. More and more people in the world have raised their consciousness and ability to tell the truth through these two struggles. All of this will produce profound impact upon the international struggle in the future.

Concerning the Cuban people's anti-American struggle, the CC has the following opinions, which are now conveyed

to you. Please orally relay these opinions to county-level Party secretaries or responsible Party cadres equal or above the level of county secretary (above cadre class 17):

(1) We must fully understand the great significance of the Cuban people's victory in this struggle. First, after more than one month's resolute struggle, the Cuban people have maintained their sovereignty and have defended the revolution, while at the same time giving a powerful blow to the intervention and serious war provocation by the US imperialists. Second, Comrade Fidel Castro and the revolutionary forces in Cuba have stood against the huge pressure from the modern revisionists, have adhered to a correct revolutionary line of Marxism-Leninism, and have persisted in a correct stance of mobilizing the people and the masses in conducting a revolutionary struggle. Third, during this struggle, the revolutionary Cuban people have experienced a test, and the Cuban revolutionary leadership represented by Comrade Fidel Castro have greatly increased its prestige, and their experience of struggling against the imperialists and modern revisionists has been greatly enriched. After winning this valuable experience, the revolutionary forces in Cuba have not been weakened but rather have been further strengthened. The pessimistic views that the revolutionary struggle by the Cuban people has suffered a serious defeat and that Cuba's people's revolution has been sold out are not compatible with the reality and, therefore, are not correct.

The great victory won by the Cuban people symbolizes that Marxism-Leninism has developed an unshakable deep root in Latin America. This is an extremely important development of the international communist movement. The rich experience of the Cuban people is invaluable for the people in Latin America. The revolutionary cause of Latin America has a very bright future.

(2) The victory of the Cuban people's struggle once again has proved that US imperialism is strong in appearance but weak in essence, and can only bully the weak but will fear the strong. First, the Cuban incident makes it clear that Kennedy has done all kinds of bad things. Therefore, we should not have any unrealistic illusion about this representative of the American monopoly capitalist class. Second, now Kennedy dares not fight a nuclear war. The United States faces great difficulty if it is to fight a nuclear war. The people of the whole world, including the American people, are against a nuclear war. Under the current situation that a nuclear stalemate has actually existed in the world, the monopoly capitalist class in the United States is unwilling to conduct a nuclear war on their own soil. Kennedy seemed to be rampant, showing a gesture as if he were to fight a nuclear

[war], [but] this is no more than nuclear bluffing toward the Soviet Union. Third, only by conducting a tit-for-tat struggle will we force the US imperialists to retreat in the face of difficulty. Concessions with no principle and accompanied by humiliation will only increase the aggressor's ambition, making him ask for a foot after gaining an inch with a bigger and bigger appetite. Fourth, what Kennedy fears the most are the revolutionary struggles by the Cuban people and the revolutionary struggles by the people in Latin America and all over the world. Only by depending upon the struggle of the people in various countries will the war and aggressive plans of the imperialists be smashed. This is the only correct way to defend world peace.

In the face of such a ferocious yet crafty enemy as Kennedy, we must follow the policy-line set up by Comrade Mao Zedong, "in a strategic sense we must despise the enemy, in a tactical sense, we must carefully study the enemy," and then we will win victory in this struggle. The victorious struggle by the Cuban people has once again proven that this is the truth.

(3) The modern revisionists have been frightened to death in the face of Kennedy's nuclear bluffing. Instead of "despising the enemy in a strategic sense while carefully dealing with the enemy in a tactical sense," they carried out a policy of adventurism, using missiles and nuclear weapons as bargaining chips to engage in a game of speculation. When Kennedy used nuclear war to threaten them, they were panic-stricken and did not know what to do. They made one concession after another and fell into passivity completely. The performance of the modern revisionists during the Cuban incident represents an unprecedented humiliation and insult in the history of socialist countries.

That the Soviet Union has withdrawn missiles and bombers from Cuba is not a bad thing for the Cuban revolution. In the first place, it was a mistake that the modern revisionists decided to establish missile bases in Cuba. Their true intention was not to support the Cuban people, but to control the Cuban revolution through violating Cuba's sovereignty. They were there not for the purpose of supporting the Cuban people in struggling against imperialism, but using Cuba as a bargaining chip in dealing with the US imperialists. If their plots were allowed to prevail, that would be extremely disadvantageous for the Cuban revolution and the revolution in Latin America. Cuba has learned a profound lesson in this incident. The most effective weapon that can be used in opposing US imperialism is not the missiles and strategic bombers that the modern revisionists have boasted [about], but the correct policy line of firmly depending upon the peoples and masses

and making everyone a soldier that the Cuban revolutionary forces have consistently carried out in the past.

(4) We should sufficiently consider the difficulties facing Cuba's revolutionary cause, and should sufficiently understand the circumstances of the Cuban comrades. The US imperialists are determined to eliminate Socialist Cuba. The tension between the United States and Cuba will continue for a long period—sometimes more tense, and sometimes less tense. Sometimes the Cuban side will even face very serious difficulties. For a certain period, Cuba still needs to depend upon Soviet support in production, trade, transportation, and arms and ammunition supply. The Cuban comrades, while sticking to revolutionary principles, have to make necessary compromises, which will not harm their sovereignty and independence, from time to time. In the struggle against imperialism, modern revisionism, and reactionary nationalism, it is inevitable that some of their policies may differ from those of ours. It is our internationalist duty to wholeheartedly support the Cuban revolution. When the Cuban comrades are persistently carrying out their revolutionary struggle, that is their biggest internationalist support to us. We should not make excessive demands on the Cuban comrades.

(5) In the past month or so, the whole [Chinese Communist] Party and the people in the whole country [of China] have received the most vivid and profound patriotic and internationalist education in the two huge mass movements—supporting Cuba's revolutionary struggle and repulsing the Indian reactionaries. All members of the Party, and the workers, peasants, People's Liberation Army soldiers, revolutionary and patriotic intellectuals and all other patriotic figures should tightly unite together, and should warmly embrace the Marxist-Leninist lines of the Party Central Committee and Comrade Mao Zedong. The shining greatness of Mao Zedong's thought has been fully demonstrated in these two struggles. Under the wise leadership of Comrade Mao Zedong, we have been able to command the initiative, catch the right timing, fully realize our potential and capacity, and influence the whole situation in the external struggles of our country, thus creating a new and more advantageous environment. We must continue to study diligently Mao Zedong's thought in practice and struggle, and raise the standard of our consciousness. Party committees at all levels should be good at directing the enthusiasm of the masses to production, daily work and study. We must hold high the three banners of the General Line, Great Leap Forward, and People's Commune, and continue to march forward victoriously, so that we will win even greater successes on all fronts.

The above notice is internal and should be restricted to leading cadres of the Party. In external propaganda and contacts, the tone of the open statements made by Central leaders and central newspapers should be followed. It should particularly be emphasized that certainly statements of this notice should not be made openly, and please pay attention to this.

The Central Committee
4 December 1962

(This is a top secret document. It will only be distributed to the level of provincial Party committee, and in no circumstances should copies be made. After use the document should be returned to the Confidential Department of the Administrative Office of the Central Committee and should then be destroyed.)

[Source: Obtained and translated by Chen Jian.]



Document No.46

Memorandum of the Conversation between Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticós and Chinese Ambassador to Cuba Shen Jian, undated [c. 6 December 1962]

Top Secret

Foreign Ministry Documents

Dorticós: Glad to see you go back here again.

Ambassador Shen: Before I left China to return to Cuba, Chairman Mao, Chairman Liu Shaoqi, and Prime Minister Zhou Enlai asked me to forward their greetings to Comrade President.

Dorticós: Thanks very much. How are Comrade Mao Zedong, Comrade Liu Shaoqi and Comrade Zhou Enlai?

Ambassador Shen: Very well. Our 10th plenum of the our party's central committee, which they [Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai] started to prepare and direct a long time ago, successfully opened this September. Now the issue at stake has become how to implement those policies produced at this meeting.

Dorticós: I have been keeping an eye on this meeting and read quite a few relevant documents and reports. What is the general situation of China?

Ambassador Shen: Now China's economic situation is very good. As Comrade President knows, China has been hit, intermittently over recent years, by natural disasters. But the harvest of 1961 was better than that of 1960, and this year's turns out to be even more encouraging than last year's. One can say the darkest period of economic difficulty due to natural disasters has now passed. The fact that within such a short period we gradually overcame difficulties proves the righteousness of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Comrade Mao Zedong. Opting for a socialist construction blueprint, the Great Leap Forward, the institution of People's Communes, is undoubtedly correct. Based on lessons and experiences of the past, our central committee now has devised a detailed implementation plan. With a correct direction and a series of fitting general policies already in position, the Chinese people feel that there is no reason that they won't do better in future socialist constructions. Naturally, because of China's vastness, it is an arduous way ahead, before we reach the stage of total electrification, mechanization, and modernization. Being a big country has a lot of advantages but also has some difficulties.

Dorticós: I'm happy to learn that the Chinese comrades overcame difficulties and are making progress. I know that the darkest period of China's economic difficulty is now over. We are quite concerned about the Sino-Indian conflict, on which we have kept a close eye. I have finished your booklet (On Nehru's Philosophy based on the Sino-Indian Conflict) and a copy of Prime Minister Zhou Enlai's letter, the one of 15 November 1962. In fact, I have read all the materials you have sent to me.

Ambassador Shen: I remember that before I left Cuba, Comrade President expressed his wish to discuss with me the Sino-Indian border problems on my future arrival. I am prepared to introduce this topic now, if Comrade President has the time today.

Dorticós: Of course I have time, and I am very much looking forward to it.

Ambassador Shen: This is the 4th volume of *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, which I brought from Beijing as a gift to you.

Dorticós: This is a very precious gift. I will definitely read it. It is well decorated. So when did this volume start and end?

Ambassador Shen: From 1945 to 1949, prior to the over-all national liberation.

Dorticós: Comrade Mao Zedong's works are the ones that we often read. I have personally collected almost all of Comrade Mao Zedong's works published in Spanish. I also have the Spanish edition of the 1st and 2nd volumes of *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.

Ambassador Shen: These are the contribution of Argentine comrades [who translated them]. We plan to translate and publish, by ourselves, the Spanish version of volumes 1, 2 and 3.

Dorticós: In that case, Comrade Ambassador owes me a debt. Do send me a copy of volumes 1, 2 and 3 after publication.

Ambassador Shen: This is the Chinese version of Prime Minister Fidel Castro's work, recently published by us, which of course Comrade President would find incomprehensible. We present you [this copy] as a gift. This is "History Will Absolve Me." These are... (ten volumes all together).

Dorticós: I have learnt this news [of the PRC publishing Castro's works in Chinese] from the newspaper. This is a great gift. You have made an excellent choice. These are all Comrade Fidel's most important works.

Ambassador Shen: To make them reader-friendly, we have published these works in the form of booklets. Circulated nation-wide, they have gained popularity from the people. This is Comrade Fidel's television speech on 1 November, this year. On the very night of this speech being broadcast, our people chose to walk to the street, rallying and demonstrating, to express their support for Cuba.

Dorticós: We have seen the news knowing that China organized a large number of marches and demonstrations. We thank you for your support, the significance of which is very much understood.

Ambassador Shen: This was our internationalist duty. Now I'm ready to brief you the situation along the Sino-Indian border.

(Briefing on the Sino-Indian border problems)

Dorticós: Was [Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal] Nehru behind the Tibetan rebellion?

Ambassador Shen: It was hatched by Nehru and American imperialism. And I could share with Comrade President [the secret] that Nehru played a major role, because only via India could American imperialists conduct their subversive activities in Tibet. Via its consulate consul located in Tibet, India has managed to collude with Tibetan slave-holders. This [collusion] has now been proven by the following fact that the Dalai Lama, the major boss of the rebels, fled to India after the rebellion was vanquished. Until now, Nehru uses them to conduct his sabotage activities. On one hand, Nehru voted for us in the United Nations, supporting [the proposal of] admitting us into the UN, on the other hand, he tried to sell the [the idea of] so-called "Tibetan Independence." By this practice Nehru has confused many people, which was in fact his plot. (Continuing the presentation on the Sino-Indian border dispute.) This is a brief introduction to the Sino-Indian border dispute. I'm happy to answer, by exhausting my knowledge, any question from Comrade President, if you have [any].

Dorticós: I have been listening carefully to your introduction. Thanks very much, for your presentation gives me a more complete understanding of the Sino-Indian border problems. In general, I have absolutely no doubt of the righteousness of China's position in the Sino-Indian border dispute. Only one thing concerns me: Would this border conflict lead to a war of a wider scale? Naturally we understand that China is not to blame. But since India is [because of this conflict] receiving more military aid from the Americans, it is entirely probable for it to lean, totally, to the imperialists.

Ambassador Shen: Recently Pakistan has publicized a document. Since it has a military treaty with the US, Pakistan protested against the American military aid to India. In response, the Americans showed Pakistan a secret military treaty, which was signed by Nehru and the US in 1951. Pakistan, then, released it to the press. So Nehru has fallen for the imperialists for a long time. At the heart of the complexity of the Sino-Indian border dispute is the fact that British and American imperialists together have thrown their weight behind Nehru.

Dorticós: I fully understand.

Ambassador Shen: We have done our utmost to strive for the possibility of the Sino-Indian border dispute being solved peacefully. Our [military] retaliation, therefore, came only after we were pushed [by Nehru] into the last corner. This

[military retaliation] is the minimum action that a sovereign country would take. Otherwise we could only hand over [to Nehru] a huge chunk of territory. But [we're confident that] once he obtained one [chunk of territory], he would ask for another. No one could twist the arms of capitalists as to make them part of the imperialist camp. In fact, they would submit to imperialism, whatever concessions [that we] made to them. In contrast, revolutionaries would never, regardless of being pushed or not, lean to the imperialists. Cuba, for example, faced an extremely difficult situation in which it had to stand up to the powerful American imperialists, [and] at the same time resist pressures from the other side [i.e., the Soviet Union]. But sticking to its five demands, Cuba flatly rejected any inspection that might damage Cuba's prestige, sovereignty, and independence. Therefore, revolutionaries are revolutionaries. Those, who wish to submit to the imperialists, would submit to the imperialists anyway. This is not because of being pushed by someone. [Nor is it the case that,] had we offered more concessions, they would have not submitted to imperialism. Comrade President attended the meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement [in Belgrade in September 1961], at which time the Sino-Indian border dispute had yet to become a serious issues. But in fact, he [Nehru] had already defected to imperialism. Comrade President had a face-to-face struggle with him, of which I should speak no more.

Of course, it does not mean that we shall abandon proper tactics in this struggle. Still we should separate him from imperialism. Furthermore, fighting in this complex and intricate battle will bring the Indian people to the truth, raise their consciousness.

Dorticós: I understand perfectly all these concerns. We hope that the Sino-Indian border problem could be resolved peacefully. Naturally, to reach this goal depends, not at all, on Chinese leading comrades' good will.

Comrade Ambassador mentioned that I have met Nehru in person. In fact, not only have I met him, I have also come to know his character from his actions. His tactic in the Belgrade meeting [of the Non-Aligned Movement] failed due to the firm position of the Cuban delegation. In that meeting, we noticed that Nehru's position of neutrality appeared dubious. And the reality has brought us to the [true] nature of his position.

I would love to talk to Comrade Ambassador about Cuba's situation. There is not much I wish to tell the Ambassador about, because I'm sure that you must have mastered Cuba's situation, though you weren't in Cuba at that time [of the missile crisis].

We once thought that an American invasion would come at any minute. Now the threat of direct military intervention has become less imminent, though the possibility remains. To secure Cuba and the peace of the Caribbean Sea, the five demands raised by Castro [on 28 October] are in fact the minimum conditions. The US, judging from the current negotiation in New York, appears not in a position to accept Cuba's five demands. Also in this crisis emerged the conflict between us and the Soviet Union. Indeed, we [always try to] maintain friendship with the Soviet Union. We appreciate [the USSR] very much for its economic, military, and technological aid. I have talked with the Soviet Union, but the division between us continues. What divided us is the fact that the Soviet Union decided to withdraw, without prior consultation with Cuba in the first place, its missiles deployed in Cuba as stipulated by the Soviet Union-Cuban military treaty. Furthermore, it permitted the on-site inspection of the missiles' removal without obtaining our agreement. In this struggle, Cuba did not adopt small bourgeoisies' romantic attitude; on the contrary, we have insisted on the correct Marxist-Leninist revolutionary position and defended Cuba's sovereignty. In the course of the Cuban-Soviet negotiations, we made the opinion extremely clear and firm to Anastas Mikoyan, the representative of the Soviet Union. Cuba firmly insists on its five demands, and stands against any attempt to conduct unilateral inspection in Cuba. Not even an inch would Cuba budge from this position.

Now the Soviet Union expresses its respect towards our position. In the Security Council, the US and the Soviet Union have reached an agreement. They together have published a statement, in which the Soviet Union confirmed the withdrawal of its missiles from Cuba and a guarantee of no deliberate attempt in the future to transfer weapons of this kind into Cuba. In this statement, the US promised only not to invade [Cuba].

Our side sees no value in this hollow promise; nor do we trust Kennedy's words. The American guarantee applies only to a circumstance in which Cuba ceases to act as a missile base. It could still invade us with the excuse of Cuba remaining a base for subversive activities targeted at the United States. Such a guarantee, besides, will not stand in the way of the US pressuring other countries to economically blockade and politically isolate Cuba, devising diplomatic conspiracy, conducting infiltration and espionage, operating pirate-like naval assaults alongside the Cuban coast like the one that happened the day before yesterday.

Our willingness to negotiate is unquestionable, but we need concrete evidence of a guarantee. We actually do not feel so optimistic towards the ongoing New York negotiations.

Ambassador Shen: Has Cuba acquired any information on the negotiation between Mikoyan, Kennedy, and [US Secretary of State Dean] Rusk?

Dorticós: Yes, we have. As far as we know, the Soviet Union did try to defend Cuba's five demands, which were dismissed and refused by the Americans to be included in discussion. Until now no agreement has been reached. We are very much doubtful that it will be reached any moment in the future. Had this consensus emerged between the US and the Soviet Union, Cuba would express its willingness to participate [in the negotiations], for we have our independent position on this matter. This agreement, highly limited in a sense that it confined its content only to issues appearing in the correspondence between Khrushchev and Kennedy, would not include Cuba's five demands. Cuba will issue an independent statement in the Security Council, in order to express Cuba's own view towards development of the entire crisis. The Soviet Union is expected to support Cuba by issuing a separate statement and publicizing the agreement with the Americans—note, this is very confidential. In other words, the Cuban problem, the Soviets believe, could be solved via two stages: stage one, reaching the Soviet-American agreement as I have mentioned previously; stage two, opening a negotiation focusing on Cuba's five demands, in the hope of resolving the Caribbean crisis once for all.

Yet, according to our observation, there is no great hope for attaining the stage-one agreement. And such an agreement, even if being reached, still means nothing to Cuba.

Yesterday, we sent a delegation to the Soviet Union, to deal with economic and trade matters. After the negotiation with the Soviet Union, [Minister of Foreign Trade] Comrade [Alberto] Mora [Becerra] will lead another delegation to China. We wish to discuss economic and trade matters for the 1963 fiscal year, and economic relations between the two countries in the future. For the upcoming 1963 fiscal year, our export situation tends to be in extremely bad shape, with export income shrinking noticeably from the 1962 level. Because our foreign trade will not start to bounce back until 1964, we badly need foreign financial aid for the upcoming 1963 fiscal year. 1963 will see a great improvement in the supply of staple foods and other necessities. [On top of that] our export income is also expected to rise dramatically from 1964 onwards. It is because although we have expanded the area for sugarcane planting this year, we could not use it next year [to generate profits from exporting]. We could start to reap profits from it only in 1964.

We fully understand that the Chinese comrades are facing a difficult time, too. But we wish that the two countries should work hand-in-hand and to our utmost, to make the

1963 bilateral trade bring both sides the most profitable outcome. We are convinced that this negotiation will strengthen the friendship between the two peoples, two governments, as well as leaderships. As Comrade Ambassador knows, the friendship between us is true friendship.

Ambassador Shen: Thanks for all this information, Comrade President. As Comrade President is aware, the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese people and the Chinese government have a consistent policy of supporting Cuba's revolution. Recently, our government has issued a series of statements indicating our support to Cuba. [We] support the five demands raised by Prime Minister Fidel. We support Cuba in rejecting of any form of inspection that leads to the damage of Cuban independence, sovereignty, and prestige.

Cuba has followed a correct Marxist-Leninist position in this struggle. [Your performance in this struggle] provides a shining example, not only to the Cuban people but also to the people of Latin America and of the world as a whole, of how a nation defends its independence.

Our friendship has grown with the collective struggle [against imperialism] and in the joint efforts [to pursue socialism]. I fully understand Cuba's situation in general and fully understand the several difficulties that Cuba faces. I'm expecting an upgrading of our relations, both economic and political, to be realized by mutual assistance. After all, this is the target of all my efforts as an ambassador.

Dorticós: Your efforts have already made very valuable achievements. You know how much we cherish all these efforts!

Ambassador Shen: We have a delegation to set off for Cuba within days. They will attend a cultural congress and activities intended to celebrate the anniversary of the victory of the revolution. The delegation is headed by comrade Zhou Yang. As an alternate member of the central committee and deputy minister of central propaganda department, comrade Zhou Yang has carried out a lot of work in the area of cultural and ideological struggle. The delegation also includes comrade Lin Mohan, who is the deputy minister of both the Propaganda Department and Cultural Department.

Dorticós: We are happy to receive this delegation. Their presence will be our honor. I wish to meet and greet them in person.

Ambassador Shen: One could also exchange experiences and learn from each other. Please forward my greeting to the President's wife.

Dorticós: Please also say hello for me to your wife.

Cc: member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, comrades of the Secretariat, Biwu (Dong Biwu) He Long, Dinyi (Lu Dinyi), Boda (Chen Boda), Kong Yuan, FANG Yi, Li Tao (4), Central Secrecy Office, Party Foreign Office (5), Central Propaganda Office (2), Central Liaison Office (5), Central Investigation Office (4), Military Intelligence Office (2), Ministry of Public Security (2), Ministry of Foreign Trade, Headquarters of the General Staff (9)

CHEN, ZHANG, JI, ZENG, GENG, HUANG, MENG, QIAO, HAN, LIU, Administration Office [of Foreign Ministry] (3), Research Office, Soviet-European Office [of Foreign Ministry], First Asian Office [of Foreign Ministry] (1), Second Asian Office [of the Foreign Ministry], Western European Office [of the Foreign Ministry], American-Australian Office [of the Foreign Ministry] (2), Asian-African Office [of the Foreign Ministry], Press Office [of the Foreign Ministry], Ambassador, Archive (3) --- Total copies (71)

[Source: Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive, No. 109-03157-01. Translated from Chinese for CWIHP by Zhang Qian.]

Notes

1 Yinghong Cheng, "Sino-Cuban Relations during the Early Years of the Castro Regime, 1959-1966," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 9:3 (Summer 2007): 78-114 (quotation on 102).

2 John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 181

3 Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (New York: Random House, 1994), p. 261.

4 During a summer 1959 visit to neutral countries such as Morocco, Egypt, and Indonesia, Che "secretly contacted the Chinese diplomats in these countries and expressed the hope of developing relations with China," also urging Beijing to buy sugar from Cuba if the United States cut off purchases. Zhou Enlai passed such reports to Mao Zedong, who approved a positive response. Yinghong Cheng, "Sino-Cuban Relations during the Early Years of the Castro Regime, 1959-1966," p. 82.

5 Jorge I. Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 27.

6 That said, Mao proved himself remarkably ignorant in some respects, i.e. when he claimed that the UK was not a nuclear power.

7 See the Hungarian Embassy in Havana's report on Deputy Foreign Minister Péter Mód's talks with political leaders in Cuba, 9 January 1962, in the collection of translated Hungarian documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

8 Ibid.

9 See Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble"—Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York: Norton, 1997), pp. 160-65.

10 See the Hungarian Embassy in Havana (Beck), report on a meeting with Yugoslav Ambassador Boško Vidaković, 19 March 1962, in the collection of translated Hungarian documents in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

11 Fursenko and Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble"*, p. 168.

12 See Fursenko and Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble"*, chap. 9, and Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2006), pp. 427-29.

13 James G. Blight, Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), p. 261 (note 118)

14 On Che's philosophical and ideological orientation, see such biographies as Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (Grove Press, 1997); Jorge Castaneda, *Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara* (New York: Knopf, 1997); and Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *Guevara, Also Known as Che* (Macmillan, 1999). On Che's ongoing close contacts with Chinese diplomats in Havana and pro-Chinese inclinations, see Cheng, "Sino-Cuban Relations during the Early Years of the Castro Regime, 1959-1966," esp. pp. 82 (1959 contacts), 88, 94-95 (November 1960 visit), 99, 103-107, 114.

15 Yinghong Cheng, "Sino-Cuban Relations during the Early Years of the Castro Regime, 1959-1966," p. 102.

16 See records of such conversations in translated Brazilian and Yugoslav documents printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

17 Nor did the Americans entirely forget about the Chinese in Havana during the missile crisis—China's embassy in Havana was secretly selected for a grenade attack by anti-Castro Cuban exiles as part of Operation Mongoose on a list of targets approved by a covert overseeing committee chaired by Robert F. Kennedy—the Special Group (Augmented)—at a meeting on the afternoon of 16 October 1962, only a few hours after President Kennedy was informed that the Soviets were emplacing nuclear missiles in Cuba; JFK's approval was relayed the next day. However, having second thoughts, on 26 October Bobby Kennedy reversed his earlier decision and revoked authority to conduct "major acts of sabotage" while tensions were so high, and there is no indication that such an assault on China's embassy in Havana was actually carried out or attempted. Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Knopf, 2008), pp. 8-9, 17, 151-2, 285.

18 On the intersection of multiple crises in Soviet foreign policy, see Mikhail Prozumenshikov, "The Sino-Indian Conflict, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Sino-Soviet Split, October 1962: New Evidence from Russian Archives," *CWIHP Bulletin*, no. 8-9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 251-257; Sergey Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens: the Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967* (Washington D.C. & Stanford, CA: Woodrow Wilson Press & Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 30-41.

19 See, e.g., Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, pp. 495-96.

20 See Soviet Embassy in Havana (Alekseev) to CPSU CC, telegram nos. 1717-1722, 2 November 1962, translation printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*. Relaying gossip on the latest meeting of Cuban leaders, Alekseev identified Guillermo García Frias, Haydée Santamaría Cuadrado, Raúl Curbelo Morales, Ramiro Valdés Menéndez, and President Osvaldo Dorticos as openly critical of Khrushchev's decision; Joaquín Ordoqui and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez as defending it; and Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Emilio Aragones, and Raul Castro as either silent or absent; and he noted that Fidel Castro let others speak and "apparently has not drawn any conclusions."

21 See the translated excerpt of the Czech record of the 30 October 1962 Khrushchev-Novotný conversation printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

22 Nikita Khrushchev's speech at the November 1962 Party Plenum, 23 November 1962, Russian State Archive of Current History (RGANI): fond 2, opis 1, delo 603, list 152.

23 See cable from the Czechoslovak Embassy in Havana, 8 November 1962, in the collection of translated Czechoslovak documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis published elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

24 For the Soviet records on Mikoyan's mission, see Sergo Mikoyan, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, edited by Svetlana Savranskaya (Washington, DC: Wilson Center Press/Stanford University Press, 2012).

25 See telegram from the Brazilian ambassador in Belgrade, Bux Ribeiro Courto, 19 November 1962, in the collection of translated Brazilian documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

26 See Hungarian Embassy, Prague, Report on Czechoslovak-Cuban Relations, 25 June 1963, translation printed in the "Czechoslovakia and Cuba, 1963" feature elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

27 Yinghong Cheng, "Sino-Cuban Relations during the Early Years of the Castro Regime, 1959-1966," p. 100.

28 See cables from the Yugoslav ambassador to Cuba, Boško Vidaković, 29 and 30 October 1962, printed in the collection of Yugoslav translated documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

29 Soviet embassy in Havana (Alekseev), telegram no. 1643-1644, 23 October 1962, translation printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

30 See the cable from the Polish Embassy in Havana, 12 November 1962, printed in the collection of Polish translated documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*. The notion that China might have shelled the Nationalist-controlled offshore islands in order to distract the Americans was not entirely far-fetched. In fact, Mao Zedong had, in internal Chinese documents, attributed his decision to shell Matsu and Quemoy four years earlier, in August 1958, to a comparable calculation, to provide indirect aid to anti-imperialist Iraqi forces who had just seized power in Baghdad by compelling Washington to focus its military attention elsewhere. See, e.g., Chinese documents in *CWIHP Bulletin* no. 6-7 (Winter 1995/1996).

31 Mikoyan cable to Khrushchev re 20 November 1962 talk with Fidel Castro, reproduced in the appendix to Sergo Mikoyan, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, ed. Savranskaya.

32 See the 3 December 1962 cable from the Hungarian Embassy in Havana (Beck) reporting on Mikoyan's 20 November meeting with socialist ambassadors in Havana, reproduced in the collection of translated Hungarian documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

33 See the report by the Hungarian chargé in Washington, János Radványi, on Mikoyan's visit to Washington, 5 December 1962, in the collection of Hungarian documents printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

34 See the report on Mikoyan's 29 November 1962 by the Czechoslovak Ambassador to the United States, Miloslav Ruzek, in the collection of translated Czechoslovak documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

35 Ibid.

36 See the Cuban record of the talk between Rodríguez and Khrushchev (with Mikoyan present) in Moscow on 11 December 1962 in the collection of translated Cuban documents (obtained by the National Security Archive at the 2002 conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis in Havana) published elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

37 See cable from the veteran Dutch ambassador in Washington, J. Herman van Roijen, on his 27 December 1962 conversation with Rusk, included in the collection of translated Dutch documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

38 See the cable from Roger Robert du Gardier, French Ambassador in Havana, to Maurice Couve de Murville, French Foreign Minister, 15 November 1962, in the collection of French documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

39 See Mikoyan cable from Havana re talks with Cubans, 26 November 1962, in the appendices to Mikoyan, *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis*, ed. Savranskaya.

40 See the Cuban record of the Rodríguez-Khrushchev 11 December 1962 conversation cited above.

41 See the 24 and 28 January 1963 reports of the Hungarian ambassador in Havana, which appear in the collection of translated Hungarian documents elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

42 For an English translation of Khrushchev's 31 January 1963 letter to Fidel Castro, released in 1992, see Lawrence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, eds., *The Cuban Missile Crisis: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: New Press, 1992), pp. 319-29.

43 Khrushchev to Castro, 31 January 1963, Russian original, copy in Russian and Eastern European Archival Documents Database (REEADD), National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.

44 Khrushchev to Castro, 31 January 1963, in Chang and Kornbluh, eds., *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, p. 320.

45 Transcript of a CC CPSU Presidium Meeting on 7 June 1963. Aleksandr Fursenko, ed., *Prezidium TsK KPSS, 1954-1964, Vol. 1* (Moscow: Rossopen, 2003), p. 721.

46 Cable from the Foreign Ministry of the PRC to the Chinese Embassy in Algeria, 4 July 1963, and Memorandum of conversation

between Zeng Tao and Ernesto “Che” Guevara, 6 July 1963. CMFA: 111-00362-06, pp. 1-10.

47 Hungarian Embassy in Sofia, Report on Bulgarian-Cuban Relations, 29 August 1963, translation printed elsewhere in this issue of the *CWHP Bulletin*.

48 See Hungarian Embassy, Prague, Report on Czechoslovak-Cuban Relations, 25 June 1963, cited above.

49 Cuban rejection of treaty: Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, pp. 67-68; Czech document: record of conversation between Carlos Rafael Rodríguez and Vladimír Koucky, Prague, 12 December 1963, translation printed in the “Czechoslovakia and Cuba, 1963” feature elsewhere in this issue of the *CWHP Bulletin*.

50 On the downturn in Sino-Cuban relations, see, e.g., Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, pp. 66-69; and Yinghong Cheng, “Sino-Cuban Relations during the Early Years of the Castro Regime, 1959-1966,” esp. pp. 102-112.

51 Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, p. 68.

52 See the translated Polish record of the 20 March 1965 conversation between Gomulka and Raúl Castro, published elsewhere in this issue of the *CWHP Bulletin*.

53 Fidel Castro comments in translated report of Czechoslovak military delegation (led by Defense Minister Bohumír Lomský) to Cuba, 30 March-9 April 1965, which appears elsewhere in this issue of the *CWHP Bulletin*.

54 See James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggles with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002); and Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution*, pp. 72-77..

55 By the late 1970s, the Cubans had even joined a secret Soviet-led Sinological coordinating group (“Interkit”) of its closest allies (i.e., the Warsaw Pact minus Albania and Romania, plus such countries as Mongolia, Vietnam, and Laos) to pool and analyze intelligence and plot strategy against the Chinese, and in December 1979 Fidel Castro himself hosted a meeting of the group in Havana. See James Hershberg, Sergey Radchenko, Péter Vámos, and David Wolff, “The Interkit Story: A Window into the Final Decades of the Sino-Soviet Relationship,” *CWHP Working Paper* no. 63 (April 2011).

56 Fidel Castro comments (as recollected by Hershberg) during lunch with visiting historians during Bay of Pigs conference in Havana, March 2001.

57 Ed. Note: After ruling South Korea since the end of World War II, Rhee was forced to resign on 26 April following student-led demonstrations, and flew into exile two days later, the same day Mao and Roca met.

58 Ed. Note: On a trip to South America from 22 February-7 March 1960, Eisenhower visited Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay.

59 Ed Note: Possibly Claudio Ramos, later Cuba’s ambassador to Algeria—thanks to Carlos Alzugaray for help on this identification.

60 Ed Note: Possibly Comandante Manuel Piñero Losada, the well-known Barbarroja (Redbeard). Ministry of the Interior Vice Minister in charge of the National Liberation Directorate. Thanks to Carlos Alzugaray for this speculation.

61 An evident allusion to the CIA-backed overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz in 1954.

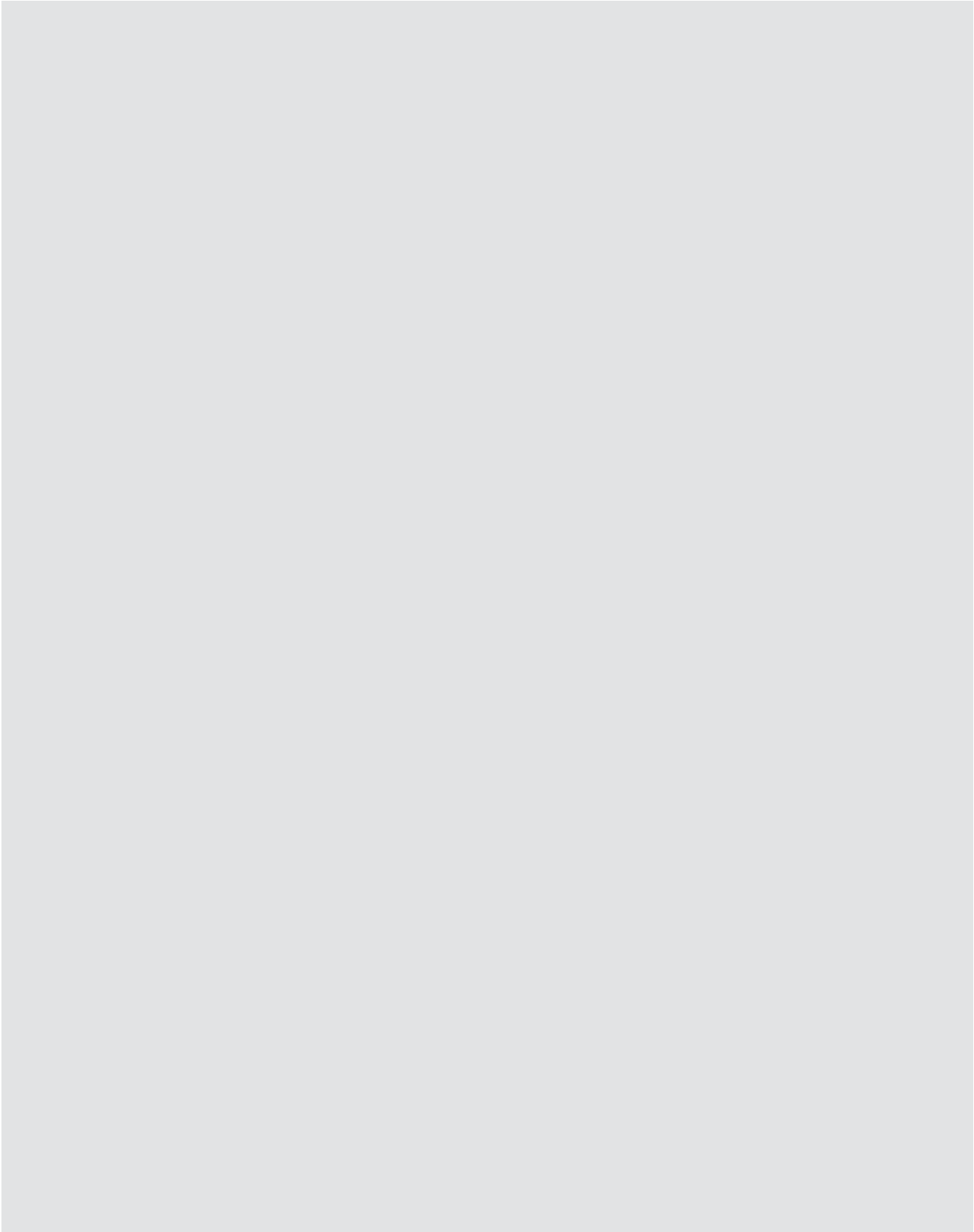
62 A reference to Ernesto Guevara, “Notes for the Study of the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution,” *Verde Olivo* (magazine of the Cuban armed forces), 8 October 1960.

63 Ed note: Mao here evidently alludes to aerial attacks on 15 April that were precursors to the Bay of Pigs invasion which began two days later.

64 Anna Louise Strong, *The Rise of the People's Communes in China* (Peking: New World Press, 1959).

65 Ed. Note: An apparent allusion to three columns released by the widely syndicated columnist in his “Washington-Merry-Go-Round” column on 13-15 August, 1962, based on his interview with the Yugoslav leader at his home on the island of Brioni.

66 Ed. Note: The US U-2 plan was actually downed over Cuba on the afternoon of Saturday, 27 October, not 28 October.



Japan and the Cuban Missile Crisis

Documents obtained, introduced, and translated by Masaki Hirata¹

At the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, in October 1962, Japan still had an embassy in Cuba, although its largest ally, the United States, had broken off relations with Cuba nearly two years earlier (Japanese-Cuban diplomatic ties had been maintained since 1929, with the exception of a hiatus from 1941 to 1952). Cuba had no particular strategic interest for Japan, but Japan was a significant trading partner for Havana because it imported a considerable amount of Cuban sugar. About 500 Japanese also lived on the island, engaging in agriculture, fishery, and housekeeping. The Japanese cables here were declassified in 2008 at the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (“Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975” file) as part of a larger opening of Japanese diplomatic records. The records capture well the domestic moods of Cuba and the Soviet Union during this critical period.



DOCUMENT No. 1

Cable from the Japanese Embassy, Moscow, 24 October 1962

Transmitted from Moscow 10/24/1962 19:53
Received in Tokyo 10/25/1962 05:31

To Foreign Minister [Masayoshi] Ohira from Chargés d'affaires ad interim [Akira] Shigemitsu

Re: The Situation in Moscow on the Cuban Blockade

The following is a report on the overall atmosphere in Moscow:

1. Several dozen policemen have been dispatched to guard the US Embassy since the afternoon of the 24th of October.
2. There were people on the street in front of the Embassy (about 230 at approximately 17:30) who seemed to be just spectators. On the trees on the street, we observed many leaflets which criticized US actions against Cuba. More people gathered with placards in their hands. They mentioned that “the US should keep away from Cuba” or that “Cuban freedom is our freedom.”

According to what one of the persons said, Lumumba University students would stage a demonstration soon.

3. A person who looked like a radio reporter was recording the voices of people with a recorder around the Embassy.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives (“Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975” file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWTIP by Masaki Hirata.]



DOCUMENT No. 2

Cable from Japanese Embassy, Havana, 25 October 1962

Transmitting from Havana 10/25/1962 13:58
Received in Tokyo 10/26/11:54

To Foreign Minister Ohira from Chargés d'affaires ad interim Kataoka

Re: The Cuban Reaction to the Announcement of the US blockade

1. The Cuban press briefly reported the content of President Kennedy's announcement and then called this an act of unreasonable aggression by the US imperialists in a very critical tone. The revolutionary government put the entire country on wartime alert and moved on to take defensive measures by mobilizing the revolutionary army and parts of the militia and placing them where they should be.
2. On the night of the 23rd [of October], Prime Minister Castro made a public speech on TV. He concluded that the US naval blockade was piracy and a clear violation of international law. Cuba is firmly opposed to this action and if the US decides to embark on military intervention in this country, they would make an all-out effort to beat it. For this, all people should become united under the revolutionary government. He did not say anything about Soviet assistance, but declared that any inspections of Cuban bases by outsiders should not be allowed because it ignored Cuba's sovereignty as an independent nation.

3. The entire city looked a bit tense and threatening because of the increased number of armed militiamen on alert in the streets and the incessant loud radio broadcasts to uplift the morale of the nation through public speakers. The public here has stayed calm as usual and the Japanese here are living a normal life so far. International airlines have been suspended, with the exception of the Cuba-Soviet line, since the 23rd [of October].

This cable has been also transferred to the [Japan's] Embassies in the US and Mexico.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry archives ("Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975" file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Masaki Hirata.]



DOCUMENT No. 3

Cable from Japanese Embassy, Havana, 26 October 1962

Transmitting from Havana 10/26/1962 20:06
Received in Tokyo 10/27/14:21

To Foreign Minister Ohira from Chargés d'affaires ad interim Kataoka

Re: The Situation in Cuba facing the US blockade

1. The Cuban press harshly condemns the US naval blockade on a daily basis and highly appreciates Soviet support. It also reported how widespread the pro-Cuban demonstrations in the world have been and blamed the pro-US attitude by NATO and the Latin American governments as means of evidence showing that they were giving in to the US imperialists. They have not reported the Japanese policy on this issue and have only mentioned that the Japanese Communist Party was appealing to the nation that people should try to keep the [Hayato] Ikeda administration from taking a pro-US stance.

2. The existence of a mediation proposal by UN Secretariat U Thant was reported. But the Cuban government's position on this has not been made public because it might have not yet received detailed information on the entire proposal. However, it is estimated that they are covertly expecting more hawkish measures from the Soviet side.

3. The domestic wartime alert system has been strengthened and the revolutionary armed militias are keeping close watch

on crucial places in Havana. Street broadcasting and street demonstrations by communist youth groups are trying to boost the people's morale.

This cable has been also sent out to [Japan's] Embassies in the US and Mexico.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry archives ("Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975" file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Masaki Hirata.]



DOCUMENT No. 4

Cable from Japanese Embassy, Moscow, 2 November 1962

Transmitted from Moscow 11/2/1962 19:55
Received in Tokyo 11/3/1962 07:66

To Foreign Minister Ohira from Chargé d'affaires ad interim Shigemitsu

Re: Moscow's Reaction to the Cuban Issue

The following items are what we found on the domestic reaction to the Cuban issue.

1. When the Soviet government issued a statement on the Cuban issue on the 24th [of October], one Soviet intellectual working at a newspaper company made the following argument which reflected suspicion and anxiety shared by others. "It's hard to understand why we had to build a military base in Cuba in the first place. It was an absurd decision. Kennedy looks gentle and timid. However, once he gets furious, he bites you hard and never leaves you even if he loses all of his teeth like an Irish bulldog. We are being bitten by such an outrageous guy."

2. On the 30th [of October], a young foreign language teacher had a conversation with one of our Embassy staff. Responding to the staffer's comment that he felt little sense of crisis by reading newspapers or watching the people in Moscow, the teacher countered that people felt so relieved just after the crisis was over, which meant that a real sense of crisis had been widespread in the society. He also said that there was much tension in the workplace meetings he attended and that you could not feel that atmosphere just by reading the papers. At one point,

he really felt threatened by the immediate possibility of the occurrence of a nuclear warfare. As an apparent example to show such feelings, he talked about some mothers he knew who had vivid wartime memories. They rushed to the nearby stores to buy large amounts of salt. He heard that salt disappeared from stores temporarily because of these excessive behaviors.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry archives ("Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975" file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Masaki Hirata.]



DOCUMENT NO. 5

Cable from Japanese Embassy, Havana, 16 November 1962

Transmitted from Havana 11/16/1962 16:25
Received in Tokyo 11/17/1962 09:49

To Foreign Minister Ohira from Ambassador [Rokuzo] Yaguchi

1. [. . .] [sic]

2. [. . .] [sic]

3. After the incident, most Soviet soldiers have disappeared from the streets and the outstanding activities by the Chinese communists have also not been spotted.

4. Inside the local stores, you can see only small amounts of commodities available. They are made in Communist China, Czechoslovakia, or Hungary. Large amounts of food, other than weapons, used to be imported from the Soviet[s]. But it seems now that there are only a few items available, such as salted fish.

5. Because of the suspension of exit application procedures, applicants cannot find a hopeful way out [of Cuba]. (Before the incident the number of official emigrants with government permission reached five or six thousand. They were to be stripped of all their possessions in defecting.)

6. The following are the findings of military importance on the situation on the Isle of Pines. They are provided by some influential Japanese coming from the island.

a. The island had been placed under a strict wartime system since the outbreak of the incident. Checkpoint gates were established all over the town. Various kinds of arms and ammunition were brought in from outside. The volume was unbelievably huge. But for the last few days, the system has seemed to loosen slightly.

b. The population of the island has reached nearly 20,000, which is twice the number as before the incident.

c. Around 2,000 prisoners, except for political offenders, have been released and joined the lowest class militias. The jailhouses are all packed with political offenders brought from other states.

7. There is only one means of transportation available connecting this country to foreign ones: Cubana Airlines offers one flight a week between Mexico City and here. (Departure schedules are not been publicly announced until the eve of the departure. The reason is said to be that they suffer from severe shortage of components and the maintenance of the aircrafts takes time.)

This cable has been also transferred to [Japan's] Embassies in the US and Mexico.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry archives ("Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975" file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Masaki Hirata.]



DOCUMENT No. 6

Cable from the Japanese Embassy, Havana, 21 November 1962

Transmitting from Havana 11/21/1962 11:51
Received in Tokyo 11/22/1962 07:20

To Foreign Minister Ohira from Ambassador Yaguchi

Re: The Cuban Situation

1. The reason why the Mikoyan-Castro talks are making slow progress is possibly related to Castro's feeling betrayed by the Soviets, which bypassed Cuba in negotiating with the US regarding the incident. (This situation can be said to be a mas-

sive debacle for Soviet diplomacy.) Mikoyan's efforts to persuade Castro will bear fruit sooner or later because the Soviets intend to tide over this crisis by all means and they hold the oil supply route which is so vital for the Cuban economy.

2. According to other diplomatic sources, there seems to be a bitter discrepancy inside the revolutionary government. On one side are far right wing people you might call "neo-communists" who worship Stalinism and tend to have a way of thinking similar to the Chinese communists. The Castro brothers belong to this group. On the other side are people who tend to take Moscow's leadership philosophy as a model. Secretary General of the Communist Party [Blas] Roca, Director of Agricultural Reform Bureau [Lazaro] Pena, and the Secretary General of the Central Labor Association belong to this faction. They are old-type Communists who are in an ideological confrontation with the former group. Yet there is little likelihood of the break-up of the revolutionary government or Castro turning pro-Soviet because of this in-house discord. At a dinner party on the 18th [of November] hosted by Mikoyan, the Castro brothers didn't show up, although Foreign Minister [Raul] Roa, Industry Minister [Ernesto "Che"] Guevara, and Chief of the Militia Army [Emilio] Aragonés attended. Some view this as a clear proof of ill feelings that the Castro brothers keep [toward the Soviets].

3. The whole nation is totally exhausted after a series of tense events over the last four and a half years (the revolution, its failure, and this crisis).

4. Castro will oppose any kind of base inspections. He may accept it on the condition of the normalization of the US-Cuban economic relations. Even in that case, the US side would not accept the demand, which means it is unlikely to realize base inspections after all.

This cable has been transferred to the [Japanese] Embassy in the US. Please pass this to the [Japanese] Embassy in the Soviet Union if necessary.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry archives ("Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975" file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Masaki Hirata.]



DOCUMENT No. 7

Cable from Japanese Embassy, Havana, 28 November 1962

Transmitting from Havana 11/28/1962 11:00

Received in Tokyo 11/29/1962 05:14

To Foreign Minister Ohira from Ambassador Yaguchi

Re: The Situation in Cuba

1. There is much speculation over the reason and purpose of Mikoyan's long 24-day stay in Cuba. But the truth over the visit remains unclear. If the purpose of Mikoyan's visit was to persuade Cuba to accept UN base inspections in accordance with Khrushchev's pledge to the UN, you might say it turned out to be perfect failure for the moment. There is a perspective that the purpose of Mikoyan's long stay was to reexamine the value of Cuba as a strategic beachhead and the prospects of the revolutionary government. This view sounds closer to reality. Whether this is right or not all depends on how the Soviets will provide assistance to Cuba from now on.

2. Regarding the reasons why Castro reportedly refused to accept Mikoyan's offer, there is the possibility that Castro may be considering the current domestic situation as dangerous as when he entered Cuba with his army five or six years ago. He might really be afraid of the breakdown of the revolutionary government as the result of loosening the current defense system because the measures would let overseas anti-government people return to the country and regain a beachhead. Castro might need the possibility of a US invasion because he wants to crack down on the anti-government movements by stirring an excessive crisis mentality among the nation. That's why he cannot accept the base inspections offer. This view seems plausible. (Castro believes that [the danger of] invasion by overseas anti-government people will never stop despite the US non-invasion pledge.)

The cable has been transferred to [Japan's] Embassies in the US and Mexico.

[Source: Japanese Foreign Ministry archives ("Cuban Domestic Policies and Situation: 1959-1975" file), Tokyo. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Masaki Hirata.]

Notes

- 1 Associate Professor, Nagoya City University.

The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Origins of North Korea's Policy of Self-Reliance in National Defense

Introduction by James F. Person¹

The trajectory of North Korea's foreign relations and economic and military planning dramatically shifted in the early 1960s in response to two events. The first was a May 1961 coup d'état in South Korea that brought to power an anti-communist military junta led by General Park Chung Hee. The second event occurred much further from Korea's borders—thousands of miles away on an island nation in the Caribbean. Combined, the Park Chung Hee coup d'état and the Cuban Missile Crisis transformed North Korea's relations with Moscow and Beijing and nudged the country down a path of unsustainable military buildup that, in part, resulted in a nuclear weapons program and was responsible for the country's economic difficulties in later decades.

North Korean leaders greeted the 1960s with optimism. The country continued its phoenix-like rise from the ashes of the devastating Korean War (1950-1953) by successfully completing, ahead of schedule, a Three-Year Plan for national reconstruction and a Five-Year Plan for comprehensive industrialization. Premier Kim Il Sung had also survived the most serious political challenge of his long tenure in 1956.² The toll of the social change at breakneck speeds that accompanied North Korea's post-war economic and political developments had not gone entirely unnoticed, and the leadership of the country had designated 1960 as a "buffer year" during which the pace of development would be slowed down before launching into an ambitious Seven-Year Plan.³ Conditions on the divided peninsula also appeared more favorable to North Korea. In April 1960, South Korean president Syngman Rhee was forced from office following a series of massive student-led demonstrations. The North Korean leadership identified in this an opportunity for unification, and proposed the establishment of a Korean Confederation that would allow for both regimes to temporarily maintain their social systems as they transitioned to a unified system of government.⁴

All of this changed on 16 May 1961 when Park Chung Hee led a coup against the democratically elected government of President Yun Po Sun and Prime Minister Chang Myong, who had been in power for less than a year after President Syngman Rhee was forced from office. Although there was some initial confusion about Park's political orientation, given a brief dalliance with communism, North Korea soon determined that the coup leader was in fact anti-communist. On 18 May, the Standing Committee of the ruling Korean Worker's Party called for measures to be taken to drasti-

cally militarize the state. According to Chinese reports of the meeting, the Standing Committee decided to "enhance our vigilance, concentrate forces on strengthening national defense, and delay the original Seven-Year Plan until 1963. Otherwise economic construction and the national defense industry would be held up."⁵ North Korea began to take such measures without delay. A month after the coup, on 19 June, a North Korean diplomat in Budapest reported to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry that Pyongyang had issued an order for the army to enhance vigilance and reduce the number of workers in industry and reassign them to the national defense industry and defensive fortifications to prepare for an emergency situation.⁶

Within two months of the South Korean military coup, North Korea signed a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union. Within days, Pyongyang signed a similar agreement with Beijing. With the inclusion of mutual defense clauses that committed both parties to aid one another if attacked, both agreements provided North Korea with a greater sense of security.

Yet, the road to getting this agreement with the Soviet Union in particular was long and not without its challenges. The treaty with Moscow therefore did not instill in Kim Il Sung a sense of confidence in Moscow's security commitment to the DPRK. In fact, Kim had been trying to get such an agreement from the Soviets for over two years. A few months after the withdrawal in October 1958 of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (which had entered North Korea in late 1950 to fight the Americans), Kim Il Sung traveled to Moscow in late January 1959 to attend the CPSU XXI Congress. During this trip, Kim proposed the signing of a mutual cooperation treaty with the Soviet Union, Pyongyang's chief supplier of advanced weaponry and machinery. Though Khrushchev acceded to his request, and agreed to visit Pyongyang later that year to sign the agreement, for over two years, the Kremlin leader found reasons to postpone his trip. Khrushchev finally signed the agreement in July 1961 when Kim traveled to Moscow.

The North Korean leadership believed that their suspicions of Moscow's unreliability were confirmed in October 1962 when Khrushchev "betrayed Cuba at the time of the Caribbean crisis."⁷ What the North Koreans viewed as Soviet capitulation in the face of pressure from the Kennedy Administration demonstrated that Khrushchev was more concerned about peaceful coexistence, and being, in the

words of Kim Il Sung, “buddy-buddy with Eisenhower and Kennedy” than he was in aiding smaller socialist countries that, in the eyes of the North Koreans, were vulnerable to being picked off, one by one, by the United States.⁸ During a tense exchange in January 1965, North Korean Vice Premier Kim Il explained to Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin that as a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the North Korean leadership felt that it “could not count that the Soviet government would keep the obligations related to the defense of Korea it assumed in the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.”⁹

This mistrust of Moscow was reinforced when the Soviets did not grant a request from Pyongyang for military aid in December 1962. In the immediate wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis, on 1 November Kim Il Sung expressed his concern to Soviet Ambassador Vasily Moskovsky that the North’s air and coastal defenses were in poor shape. Major cities, such as Pyongyang, Wonsan, Chongjin, and Hamheung, were poorly protected from air raids. He therefore requested permission to send a delegation to Moscow to discuss military aid.¹⁰ Kim requested that the Soviet Union deliver—on credit—over 100 million rubles in military aid to North Korea. Specifically, to enhance coastal defenses, he asked for submarines. For air defenses, Kim requested an unspecified number of MIG-21s and twelve surface-to-air missile batteries.¹¹ In a 14 November conversation with Ambassador Moskovsky, Kim Il Sung played up the threat to North Korea, remarking “I know that [First Secretary Khrushchev and Second Secretary Frol Kozlov] are no less concerned than I about the defense of the Far Eastern forward post...it provides a convenient platform for the enemy’s landing.”¹² Yet, Deputy Premier Kim Gwanghyeop’s 29 November to 5 December visit to Moscow ended in failure. Moscow would sell the weapons to Pyongyang, but not give them on credit.¹³ Without delay, the North Korea regime escalated its efforts to achieve self-reliance in national defense. One week later, the Fifth Plenum of the Fourth KWP Central Committee formally adopted what it referred to as the equal emphasis policy, initially launched in the wake of the May 1960 military coup in South Korea, which called for simultaneous development of heavy industry and defense capabilities. The Plenum also declared Four Military Guidelines: to arm the entire population; to fortify the entire country; to train the entire army as a “cadre army”; and to modernize weaponry, doctrine, and tactics under the principle of self-reliance in national defense. Hungarian diplomats reported that by February 1963 “large-scale work [was] going on throughout the country; not only entrenchments but also air-raid shelters for the population [were] being built in the mountains.”¹⁴

This policy of keeping the country in a state of mobilization had drastic effects on the North Korean economy. As Vice Premier Kim Il would later describe, because of the lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis, North Korea was “compelled to keep an army of 700,000 and a police force of 200,000. These huge armed forces constituted enormous expenses for the national economy of the DPRK, and this is why neither industry nor agriculture had made headway.”¹⁵ Kim Il Sung elaborated on the tremendous economic cost to Kosygin:

We had to look for financing exclusively within our own country, and we could get it only at the expense of other sectors. I am sure I don’t have to tell you how large amounts of money it involved. That is why we are currently falling behind in completing the 7-year plan by one year, and we still need 3 to 5 years in order to fulfill the seven year plan at least in basic parameters. However, 4 years and 2 months have passed and we have fulfilled less than half of the 7-year plan’s goals.¹⁶

The Cuban Missile Crisis also led to a major shift in North Korea’s foreign policy orientation. Despite long-standing disagreements between Moscow and Pyongyang over North Korea’s autarkic development strategy, relations remained cordial through 1962. In the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis, however, North Korea publicly sided with the Chinese in the Sino-Soviet split, and expressed opposition to Khrushchev’s purported revisionism, particularly his policy of peaceful coexistence with the United States. Both Pyongyang and Beijing advocated for a far more militant policy of anti-imperialist struggle.

The Soviet-North Korean rift lasted from the fall of 1962 through the end of 1964. During this period, North Korea drew closer to the People’s Republic of China than at any point in the history of Sino-DPRK relations. The fear of losing their freedom of action due to long-term exclusive orientation toward the PRC eventually forced North Korean leaders to change their approach to developing international contacts with the USSR and European socialist countries. This change coincided with Khrushchev’s involuntary departure, in October 1964, from the leadership of the CPSU and USSR. In January 1965, North Korean Vice Premier Kim Il went to Moscow where he met with Kosygin. The two held very frank talks in which Kim Il revealed North Korea’s thinking on the Cuban Missile Crisis and the actions Pyongyang was forced to take in light of the perceived betrayal to the smaller countries in the socialist camp. Kim accused the Soviets of having betrayed the Cubans, and two years later the (North) Vietnamese by not responding fittingly to the August 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident.¹⁷

The next month, in February 1965, while returning from a trip to Hanoi and then Beijing, Kosygin visited the DPRK where he met twice with Kim Il Sung. The North Korean leader echoed many of comments which Kim Il had made in Moscow the previous month. Kosygin defended Moscow's response to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and, turning Pyongyang's own rhetoric on Kim, admonished the North Korean leader for not doing enough in the anti-imperialist struggle.¹⁸ The Soviet Union, Kosygin argued, was in fact fighting imperialism. During their second conversation, Kim elaborated on the tremendous economic difficulties the DPRK faced as a result of measures to strengthen national defense that were adopted in December 1962 because of the perceived unwillingness of Moscow to live up to its security commitments to Pyongyang. The February 1965 Kosygin visit became an important catalyst of the favorable change in Pyongyang's attitude toward the Moscow.

While the shift in North Korea's foreign relations after the Cuban Missile Crisis was short-term and relations with Moscow once again improved, Pyongyang never abandoned its belief in bellicose anti-imperialism. Later in the 1960s, for a period of about three years, North Korea began to launch cross-border raids and engaged in other provocative acts against South Korea at a rate of nearly one a day.¹⁹ Other impacts of the Cuban Missile Crisis on North Korea were not so temporary. A careful reading of the available documentary evidence from the archives of Pyongyang's former communist allies suggests that Kim Il Sung never fully trusted the Soviets again. Moreover, the country remained in an uninterrupted state of mobilization for decades and escalated efforts to achieve self-reliance in national defense, particularly through the acquisition of a nuclear deterrent. This contributed in part to North Korea's eventual economic slowdown.



DOCUMENT No. 1

Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 8 January 1965

In mid-December [Soviet Ambassador] Comrade Moskovsky returned from Moscow, and [...] told me the following about the negotiations which had taken place between Comrade [Alexei] Kosygin, the chairman of the Soviet Union's Council of Ministers, and the Korean party and government delegation that went to Moscow on the occasion of the November 1964 celebrations:

In the presence of Comrade Kosygin, Kim Il, the head of the delegation, raised the issue of certain injuries (pretensions), which were the following:

1) The Korean leaders were distrustful of the CPSU and the Soviet government, they could not count on that the Soviet government would keep the obligations related to the defense of Korea it assumed in the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, Kim Il said, and therefore they were compelled to keep an army of 700,000 and a police force of 200,000. These huge armed forces constituted enormous expenses for the national economy of the DPRK, and this is why neither industry nor agriculture had made headway in the last two years, they [the KWP leaders] could not invest substantial sums in these [sectors].

Comrade Kosygin asked him what caused this distrust. In the view of Kim Il, the Soviet Union had betrayed Cuba at the time of the Caribbean crisis, and later it also betrayed the Vietnamese. For instance, it happened as late as 8 days after the Tonkin [Gulf] provocation [in August 1964] that the Soviet government made a mild pro-DRV statement.

Thereupon the chairman of the Council of Ministers replied the following: It was incomprehensible to him how could the Korean leaders be so uninformed, they had not the slightest idea of how costly it had been for the Soviet Union to protect the freedom and independence of Cuba. At the time of the Caribbean crisis, Comrade Kosygin said, the whole Soviet merchant fleet and several warships had been busy with shipments to Cuba. They shipped Cuba everything it needed. Before the crisis, Cuba had faced American imperialism, which was armed to the teeth, almost unarmed. Apart from the known missiles, the Soviet Union provided Cuba with all the modern arms, including the most up-to-date aircraft, tactical missiles, and other military equipment, that now enabled it to resist the pressure of American imperialism efficiently. He set forth in detail what sort of and how many aircraft, tanks, etc. had been shipped to Cuba as aid. Comrade Kosygin then added that at the time of the Caribbean crisis, it was neither China nor Korea but the Soviet Union that had stood on the brink of war, face to face with the United States.

As for the Tonkin provocation, Comrade Kosygin went on, for one thing, the Soviet government had assumed the Chinese and Korean military forces to be strong enough to protect the Democratic Republic of Vietnam against the American imperialist attacks, for these [countries] were closer to Vietnam than the Soviet Union. Secondly, the Korean leaders once again revealed their lack of information, for instance, they did not know that right after the Tonkin provocation, at the request of the government of the DRV the leaders of the Soviet state had paid particular attention to the situation in Vietnam, and decided that efficient modern arms should

be urgently given to the Vietnamese comrades as aid. As a consequence of this decision, various military equipment of an adequate quantity was launched for Vietnam. The Chinese government gave its consent to their transport via China by air and by rail. To his knowledge, Comrade Kosygin said, the airborne units had already arrived in Vietnam, while the trains transporting other military equipment were on their way. Then he enumerated everything that had been sent to Vietnam in recent weeks. After that, Comrade Kosygin said that he was sorry to see that the Korean comrades, due to their lack of information, raised the issue of distrust with regard to the Soviet Union for no reason.

In the view of Kim Il, the Soviet Union did not support the national liberation struggle of the Asian and African peoples. Thereupon Comrade Kosygin asked him whether the freedom fighters of Africa were not equipped with Soviet arms, whether it was not the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and other socialist countries that shipped these arms to the Africans.

[...].

[Source: MOL, XIX-J-1-j Korea, 1965, 73. doboz, IV-100, 001819/1965. Translated for CWIHP by Balázs Szalontai.]

DOCUMENT No. 2

Record of a conversation with the Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK Comrade V.P. Moskovsky about the negotiations between the Soviet delegation, led by the USSR Council of Ministers Chairman Kosygin, and the governing body of the Korean Workers Party, which took place at the USSR Embassy in Pyongyang on 16 February 1965.

Participants in the conversation: CSSR c. V. Moravec, PRH (Hungary) c. J. Kovacs, PRP (Poland) c. V. Napieraj, GDR c. H. Brie, PRMo c. D. Sharav, Cuba c. L. Vigoa, and the PRB chargé d'affaires a.i. c. L. Pavlov.

C. Moskovsky said at the beginning that the Korean side initiated the delegation's visit. During the delegation's stay in the PRV [sic; People's Republic of Vietnam, i.e., North Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam—ed.], the DPRK Minister of Foreign Affairs Deputy Kim Yong Nam originally invited him for a hunt on 8 February this year. On 6 February, this invitation was hastily changed to Sunday, 7 February. C. Moskovsky went with Kim Yong Nam to a remote district about 100 km from Pyongyang. Soon after their arrival, Kim Yong Nam relayed to him Kim Il Sung's

request that he finds out whether the delegation led by c. Kosygin would accept an invitation to visit the DPRK.

C. Moskovsky immediately promised to pass the request on but asked why it was necessary to discuss this matter at a hunt. Kim Yong Nam replied that they wanted to use this "common diplomatic way."

C. Gromyko and the delegation were informed about Kim Il Sung's wish the same evening. The delegation agreed if it could be only a two or three day excursion. The Korean side was informed about it. Then, on 10 February, the Soviet Embassy received a written invitation where the name of the delegation was not specified (a dotted line was in the place for the name), and the USSR titulary was asked to also relay to c. Kosygin that the Korean side was leaving it up to him to determine the character of the delegation (c. Moskovsky's impression: the Korean side was apparently concerned that if they chose an inappropriate name, the invitation might not be accepted). The format of the public announcement about the delegation's arrival was also finalized with c. Moskovsky. The delegation then decided to keep the same name it had in the PRV.

The whole time until the delegation's arrival in Beijing, the Korean side was trying to find out how long c. Kosygin would stay in the PRC. It was a bit disappointed when it learned that the delegation would leave the PRC for the DPRK as early as on 11 February. That is, it expected longer talks in Beijing.

Out of the delegation's stay in the DPRK, c. Moskovsky concentrated namely on the course of talks with the KWP leadership.

He said that the first meeting took place on 12 February. It was agreed at the opening of the talks that first c. Kosygin would make his presentation, and then c. Kim Il Sung would present the KWP position on the next day. During the initial conversation, a program for the delegation's stay in the DPRK was also approved in general. Among other things, c. Kosygin requested that the program include only usual mandatory protocol actions and no other, like excursions to factories and so on. He again pointed out that the delegation could stay in the DPRK 3 days at the most.

In his 4-hour presentation, c. Kosygin talked about following issues:

- The delegation's mission—to renew good friendly relations with the KWP and the DPRK.
- He informed the KWP leadership about the internal situation in the USSR.
- Foreign policy of the USSR.

- Actions of the CPSU CC after the October 1964 plenary session.

Right at the beginning he also pointed out that his presentation should not be taken as his subjective opinion; he was going to show in talks how the whole leadership of the CPSU views these issues and what is its position.

In the course of the conversation he then informed the KWP leadership about the situation and good results in USSR manufacturing and its successful planned development. When talking about agriculture, he pointed out a number of difficulties the CPSU faces and deals with. He said that as it appears, shortcomings of the USSR agriculture are not affecting only the USSR but are characteristic for all socialist countries. He said that practically all our countries must buy grain abroad these days. True, some countries, like Romania, sell grain after the harvest but have shortages of it soon after and must buy it back. "Even though we had a good harvest in the USSR this year, we had to buy again. Many of these difficulties were caused by Khrushchev's incorrect directive to substitute the shortage of bread in the population's diet with increased consumption of meat, that is, with increased slaughtering of livestock. As a result of that, we have today low numbers of livestock, and we will be able to achieve the level of 1962 only by middle of 1966."

While talking about foreign policy, c. Kosygin informed the KWP leadership about all the most complicated problems of current international relations, and also advised it about the CPSU CC position on these issues.

He first talked about the last session of the Warsaw Pact political consultative committee. He said that it was summoned at the request of the GDR [German Democratic Republic; East Germany] on concerns of growing danger from the FRG [Federal Republic Germany; West Germany]. Kim Il Sung immediately reacted to it with a question whether the PRA [People's Republic of Albania] was invited to this session as well. C. Kosygin said yes but at the same time pointed out that the Albanian leadership responded with an insulting letter. Therefore it was agreed not to discuss the letter. Nevertheless, Albania was still given a chance to return. In connection with Kim Il Sung's question, c. Kosygin informed the Korean side about the recent initiative of the USSR to renew mutual diplomatic representation between the USSR and the PRA, which the Albanian side completely ignored. That all illustrates, as c. Kosygin then commented, that the PRA is excluding itself from the socialist camp.

As for the Warsaw consultations, c. Kosygin again pointed out that it was summoned due to the German issue coming to a head, and that the meeting of the political consultative committee unanimously called for taking necessary measures

along the line of the Warsaw Pact Treaty. Among other things, a proposal was discussed there about setting up a Warsaw Pact Command Center that would be in charge of a permanent build-up of defenses. He also mentioned a negative position of the Romanian delegation, which so far prevented carrying out this measure. He further mentioned the Romanian delegation's initiative for abolishing all pacts, including the Warsaw Pact.

He further briefly touched upon meetings of [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei] Gromyko with [US President Lyndon B.] Johnson and [Secretary of State Dean] Rusk, about which the USSR Ambassador already informed c. Kim Il Sung earlier. In connection with that, Kim Il Sung again pointed out that during these meetings, the DPRK and its request of American troops' withdrawal from South Korea was not mentioned. C. Kosygin assured him again that the USSR identifies fully with support of the DPRK foreign policy. When talking about the USSR foreign policy, c. Kosygin said that until the October [1964] plenary of the CPSU CC, this part of the CPSU policy was also affected by number of Khrushchev's subjective influences that the CPSU CC does not agree with. Then c. Kim Il Sung interrupted him with a remark: "Yes, yes, we even thought that he would go to [Chancellor Ludwig] Erhard in the FRG in order to sell the GDR."

C. Kosygin did not react to this remark and continued that after the October [plenum], different relations prevailed in the CPSU CC, the evidence of which are also the delegation's talks with the KWP leadership. "We have reintroduced principles of collective decision making and collective reason. That is the fundamental pre-requisite for mutual relations among fraternal parties. This collective reason can better judge what unites us, what divides us, and what we do not agree with. It is best suited to prevent us from revealing openly what we do not agree with, and giving thus a chance to imperialists to use our disagreements against us." He said that every country has many special features, especially of national character. Khrushchev allegedly did not show any interest in considering these differences. That, of course, was not right. "Vietnam has special features; by the way, we delivered there a lot of weapons and ammunition recently; Cuba has special features; our aid there also represents a considerable contribution to the struggle of the Cuban people; every country has special features, and we have to take it into account. However, these special features must not override our common line. You were accusing us of many things. True, your own objections were restrained and dealt mostly with economic problems but you were bringing up and stressing many Chinese accusations." To that, Kim Il Sung retorted that the KWP line has always been independent and not Chinese. He said:

“We have always been for pure Marx-Leninism without any amendments.” and he repeated: “We apply the purest Marx-Leninism and condemn both the fabricated additions of the Chinese, and the mistakes of the USSR.”

Then he asked c. Kosygin three questions:

What is the USSR position on Indonesia leaving the UN?

How is the CPSU CC dealing with the problem of calling an international meeting of fraternal parties[?]; whether and how the USSR supports the liberation movement.

Whether the CPSU CC has any critical comments on the KWP.

C. Kosygin reacted to it immediately. About Indonesia leaving the UN, he said that they exchanged very nice letters with Mr. Sukarno. In his letter, Mr. Sukarno expressed a concern that this step by Indonesia might damage relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviet side assured him that the USSR policy towards Indonesia would not change and remains friendly. However, the Soviet government considered it necessary to mention to him that it would be more appropriate if Indonesia stayed within the UN. “True, we agree with his criticism of the UN but we believe it was not necessary to slam the door.” Sukarno allegedly replied with a nice letter where he expressed how glad he was that relations with the USSR would not change.

About consultations of fraternal parties, c. Kosygin said that the date March 1 for the meeting [in Moscow] of the editorial commission would be kept. He stated that the meetings would only be of consultative character, and no joint document is expected to be issued. There is also not supposed to be any request for future consultations, as it was with the last consultations of FP [Fraternal Parties]. “The objective of meetings will be similar consultations to those you regularly hold with the Chinese and that you held with 22 delegations from Latin America.” Kim Il Sung commented: “That’s bad. It will cause a discord in the ICWM [International Communist World Movement].” C. Kosygin replied that the position of the CPSU CC and all 60 fraternal parties is solid and unchangeable. “All 60 fraternal parties demand clarification of the situation. Should we now reject this requirement, we would get into a conflict with those 60 fraternal parties. If the meeting is organized, only 3 parties will be against it. It is thus up to you whether you participate or not. The date of the meeting is firmly set on March 1, and we have a final commitment from 19 fraternal countries. As for the agenda of the talks, you probably expect that we will mainly discuss polemics within the ICWM. That would be incorrect, though. The main topic at the talks will be how to achieve unification of the ICWM.”

As for the question of the CPSU attitude towards the KWP, c. Kosygin pointed out that he had talked about these issues briefly with c. Kim Il Sung during his stay in Moscow [in November 1964] for celebrations of the 47th anniversary of the GOSR [Great October Socialist Revolution]. “Our attitude towards you,” he said, “is the same as towards other fraternal parties and countries. We were glad in the past that our mutual friendship was flourishing. These relations, though not by our fault, deteriorated considerably in the last years. I would like to tell you that we are aware of your specificities, and therefore we visited you in order to talk with you about what unites us. However, you have many objections to us. You are accusing us that we do not fight with imperialism and that we even side with it. Do you really think that namely we would be capable to align ourselves with imperialism against communist parties?”

Here again c. Kim Il Sung interjected with a remark that Khrushchev was buddy-buddy with Eisenhower and Kennedy. C. Kosygin only replied that it is not appropriate to make remarks like that at a meeting of such a high level. “I did not meet with you in order to badmouth Khrushchev. Let us rather discuss how to further fight with imperialists. Let us establish a program for this struggle and reach a consensus about what method is better, whether yours and the Vietnamese, that is Chinese, or ours and that of other fraternal countries. By the way, that is one of the main issues we want to discuss at meetings.”

“You ask how we are helping the national liberation movement. For instance, take Indonesia. We provided all their military equipment. Indonesian aircraft, weapons for ground forces and navy, all of which is from us. Our military advisors are training the Indonesian army, and I think it is no secret to you that when Indonesians were not yet able to fight with these weapons, our people were doing it for them. And now you tell me how do you fight with imperialism?” C. Kim Il Sung replied that their main means are meetings and press. C. Kosygin remarked: “You see, you call this help but you have to understand that the time for meetings is behind us. Only actions count today. For instance Cuba. Where would she be if she did not have a well-equipped and armed army? And who provided both clothing and all weapons and organization of this army? Or how about the PRV, who was again bombarded in the last days by American planes?”

“I would like to tell you that I talked about it with Mao Zedong during our stopover in Beijing. I asked him what they were doing to support the PRV. I was told that they allegedly moved a large army to the Vietnamese border just in case there is a big war. But why wait for a big war, I asked, when Vietnam needs help now, immediately. We will give you immediately and free of charge as many planes and weapons

as you need; only help the PRV. If they destroy 100 of your planes, we will immediately give you other [planes], even 200, but help.

“Mao Zedong also talked about how 4 American cruisers operate in Vietnamese waters. I told him: Sink them! We will give you weapons even for that, our most modern submarines. Do you want ten of them? You will have them, and completely free of charge. Just sink those cruisers! Do you want to know how Mao Zedong took it? He turned away from me and changed the subject. He started to talk about the history of China. Despite of that, I was still calling on the Chinese comrades: Defend Vietnam! We will give you completely free of charge all the necessary weapons and planes and submarines. And if they destroy them, we are willing to give you new ones and twice as many. But help Vietnam. Are you not its close neighbors?” Kim Il Sung and all other members of the Korean delegation listened especially to this part of c. Kosygin’s talk. Kim Il Sung himself in no time asked c. Kosygin how he views the current situation in South Vietnam, and with an obvious concern he then asked whether American provocations would not lead to a “great war.”

In the ensuing conversation, c. Kosygin made the KWP leadership familiar in detail with the USSR aid to the National Liberation Movement [of South Vietnam] and with training of guerilla cadres in the Soviet Union, and he asked Kim Il Sung: “How can we write about it in the press? And you cry to the whole world that we do nothing.” C. Kim Il Sung replied: “Well, we are finally publishing in *The Truth* scathing articles against imperialism.” C. Kosygin: “But I told you already that writing in the press and calling names does not cut it anymore. Tell me though, which of these two ways of support of the National Liberation Movement is more effective?” C. Kim Il Sung did not answer that.

As c. Moskovsky, who was present at the talks, told us, it also became obvious during the conversation about Vietnam that the KWP leadership had no information at all either about the situation in South Vietnam or about the quantity, kinds, and strength of weapons that the USA deployed in South Korea.

C. Moskovsky told us about the second meeting on February 13 that it started at 10 o’clock and lasted till 2:30 pm. C. Kim Il Sung was talking and was occasionally interrupted by c. Kosygin’s questions. According to c. Moskovsky’s assessment, Kim Il Sung acted objectively and calmly. He first thanked C. Kosygin for accepting the invitation and for his presentation at the meeting in the Great Theatre. He said that this presentation was a remarkable contribution to Marx-Leninism, and it allegedly also contributed to the increased enthusiasm of the Korean people. He also thanked for the honest and open conversation at the first meeting that

he regarded as a significant contribution to strengthening of unity of the two countries. He then especially thanked for clarification of the situation in Vietnam and the Soviet Union. He therefore also wants to openly and honestly inform the Soviet delegation about the situation in the DPRK and about the KWP CC position on the discussed issues.

When talking about the DPRK, he said: “We are now struggling to fulfill the 7-year plan put forth by the IV Plenary of the KWP. However, I also have to tell you that we are in a bad shape.

When we were putting together this long-term plan, we lacked most of all necessary experience for working it out. We used what we learned from the previous three- and five-year plans. That, of course, was the cause of our difficulties today, our complex situation. To make things worse, we suffered greatly because of disagreements with you and other socialist countries, and because of disagreements within the ICWM. That is, the goals of the 7-year plan presumed aid from and further broadening of cooperation with you and other socialist countries. We were counting on this aid but, unfortunately, it did not materialize. That was the main reason why we did not fulfill the plan.

Due to the Caribbean [i.e., Cuban missile] crisis and the American aggression in Vietnam, we were forced to quickly build up our defenses and especially our defense industry. We had to look for financing exclusively within our own country, and we could get it only at the expense of other sectors. I am sure I don’t have to tell you how large amounts of money it involved. That is why we are currently falling behind in completing the 7-year plan by one year, and we still need 3 to 5 years in order to fulfill the seven year plan at least in basic parameters. However, 4 years and 2 months have passed and we have fulfilled less than half of the 7-year plan’s goals.

[...].

[Source: Czech Foreign Ministry Archive. Translated for CWIHP by Adolf Kotlik.]



DOCUMENT No. 3

“Information on the Meeting of [Albanian] Comrade Piro Biti with the [North] Korean Ambassador to Tirana,” 7 August 1967

On his request, I received the Korean ambassador. After I asked him about any news from Korea, he answered as follows:

[...]

“Comrade Kim Il Sung teaches us that we must not forget that the construction of socialism in our country is being done while imperialism, which is the enemy of socialism, continues to exist and that is why we need to achieve both the economic construction and the military construction. If we should overvalue one of them or undervalue the other, we would be going to the extreme, so we must combine the two. At the Party Conference of last year, comrade Kim Il Sung reiterated that neither of the two should have a one-sided character.

“Comrade Kim Il Sung teaches us that we must fight the belief that should the war start, the economy will be destroyed and that is why we must concentrate our forces into the military construction. At the same time we must fight the tendency to think that we are doing well and that is why we need to only pay attention to the economic construction and disregard the military one.

“Both these needs are undivided from each other, because while strengthening the economy, the life quality of the people and our defensive power are increased and we can show the world the supremacy of the socialist system. By getting stronger militarily, we will be able to withstand any aggression, and that is why our enemies will never dare to attack us. We must strengthen the defense of our country especially at the present when the American imperialism is waging in all the continents wars of an aggressive character, is threatening the socialist countries, and is following the strategy of leaving the large states alone while turning the blade of its weapons against the small or separated socialist countries to swallow them. In other words, the American imperialism is following the strategy of swallowing one by one the small socialist countries and leaving the larger ones for later. In [December] 1962, at the 5th Plenum of the party, comrade Kim Il Sung reiterated that we must take even further the course of the combination of the economic construction with the military one keeping in mind the events in the Caribbean and the incident at the Tonkin Bay.

“Today the situation is difficult due to the aggression against Vietnam, due to the aggression of Israel in the Middle East, and due to the provocations at the line of demarcation in Korea. Our party reiterates that in these moments we must strengthen the defensive power of the country. We have increased even more that before our defensive strength and the armament of the people. This is the policy that we have

also followed in the past, but recently we intensified it even more, because of the severity of the situation.

“We must:

Transform our popular military into a military of cadres, which means a strong military in terms of quality and which will be able to rise up to its feet immediately after being called upon.

Modernize our military. In other words, we must have a military which possesses modern technology and strategic capability.

Arm the entire people. We must use the course of the masses in the military, so that it may be able to face the present conditions. Because in the present conditions, should a war start, there will be no front and rear lines, the entire country will become the front. The entire people must defend the country. The workers must defend the factories and the peasants, their cooperatives.

Fortify the entire country. We must make sure that [North] Korea is turned into a gigantic bunker that can withstand rockets, tanks, chemical weapons, aviation, etc.

“It is possible that the Albanian military delegation that visited our country saw these preparations and construction. We have done this not only at the front line and in the shores, but also at every corner of our country. We are fully prepared that should the enemy dare to attack us, we will deliver sudden, death-spelling blows to him.”

[...]

[Source: AQPPSH, MPP Korese, D 2, V. 1967. Translated for CWIHP by Enkel Daljani.]

Notes

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2 See James F. Person, “New Evidence on North Korea in 1956,” *CWIHP Bulletin* 16 (Spring 2008): 447-454.

3 See, for example, Balazs Szalontai, *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era: Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism, 1953-1964* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 138.

4 See “New East German and Soviet Evidence on North Korean Support to South Korean Political Parties and Labor Unions,” *NKIDP eDossier* no. 8 (June 2012).

5 “Contents of the 18 [May] [North] Korean Party Central [Committee] Standing Committee Meeting,” 21 May 1961, Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive, File No. 106-00581-06.

6 Hungarian Foreign Ministry, Memorandum, 22 June 1961, “Visit of Comrade Paek Chong-won.” XIX-J-1-j Korea (Top Secret Documents), 1945-64, 3, doboz, 4/af, 003159/7/1961.

7 Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 8 January 1965, MOL, XIX-J-1-j Korea, 1965, 73. doboz, IV-100, 001819/1965, Report. (See Document No. 1.)

8 Record of a conversation with the Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK Comrade V.P. Moskovsky about the negotiations between the Soviet delegation, led by the USSR Council of Ministers Chairman Kosygin, and the governing body of the Korean Workers Party, 16 February 1965, Czech Foreign Ministry Archive. (See Document No. 2.)

9 See Endnote 7.

10 Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador to North Korea Vasily Moskovsky and Kim Il Sung, 1 November 1962, AVPRE, Fond 0102, Opis 18, Papka 93, Delo 5, Listy 135-138.

11 Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador to North Korea Vasily Moskovsky and Kim Il Sung, 14 November 1962, AVPRE, Fond 0102, Opis 18, Papka 93, Delo 5, Listy 152-154.

12 Ibid.

13 See, for example, Szalontai, *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era*, 192.

14 Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 15 February 1963, XIX-J-1-j Korea, 6. Doboz, 5/d, 0011/RT/1963.

15 See Endnote 7.

16 See Endnote 8.

17 Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 8 January 1965, MOL, XIX-J-1-j Korea, 1965, 73. doboz, IV-100, 001819/1965.

18 Conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, 19 February 1965, Hungarian National Archives.

19 See Christian F. Ostermann and James F. Person, eds., *Crisis and Confrontation on the Korean Peninsula, 1968-1969: A Critical Oral History* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2011).

North Vietnam and the Cuban Missile Crisis

By Pierre Asselin¹

For many in Hanoi, the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 underscored the risks and limitations of diplomacy. The John F. Kennedy administration, they surmised on the basis of the outcome of the crisis, would stop at nothing to win the Cold War, including risking a nuclear Armageddon. At the same time, it discredited Khrushchev in their eyes, and peaceful coexistence with him. “The Russian call for peaceful co-existence has much less appeal” among Vietnamese, foreign diplomats in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV/DRVN) capital reported shortly after the Cuban crisis ended.² The Soviet premier had been humiliated, and had embarrassed the entire socialist camp by extension. This of course increased the allure of Beijing’s radical prescriptions on national liberation, and thus those of Vietnamese hardliners who had been calling for a dramatic escalation of armed struggle in the South.³ In late October Prime Minister Pham Van Dong told a reporter from the French communist newspaper *L’Humanité* that his government “strongly supports national liberation movements in the world, against all forms of colonization.” Observers at the time thought those comments “put the DRV firmly into the Eastern wing of the Socialist camp.”⁴

Like the failure of the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos—acknowledged in the National Assembly in February 1963—the outcome of the Cuban crisis exacerbated tensions within the Vietnamese communist party (officially the Vietnamese Workers Party [VWP], or Lao Dong) between committed moderates and hardliners over the war in the South.⁵ Ho Chi Minh later confided to Soviet diplomats that the outcome of the Cuban affair had alienated many Vietnamese who felt that Moscow had abandoned Havana as it had abandoned them in matters concerning American aggression.⁶ “The difference between the official attitude” in Hanoi favoring a diplomatic solution in the South “and that being [popularly] propagated within the country” favoring armed struggle, one assessment noted, “may ... reflect on the one hand, the basic loyalty to the USSR of most members of the Government,” and, “on the other, the fundamental identity of views of the mass of the party membership with those of the Chinese.” “As long as the present leadership subsists,” this assessment predicted, “the DRV will continue to steer roughly a middle course between the Russian and Chinese policies.” But “in the body of the party sympathy for the Chinese attitudes will continue to grow as the feeling of frustration about South Vietnam continues.”⁷ “Although it appears at first glance that Chinese influence or participation in Vietnamese military

affairs [is] predominant,” a Canadian diplomat noted a little later in December, “it should not be considered (necessarily) as a trend away from the Soviet Union.”⁸ What was now a slim majority in VWP ruling circles in fact remained “loathe to sacrifice” economic progress above the seventeenth parallel for a wider war in the South that carried with it risks of an American invasion and a Chinese occupation of the DRVN.⁹

As conditions in the South continued to deteriorate, and in light of recent international developments and the Cuban crisis in particular, increasing numbers on both sides of the seventeenth parallel clamored for an escalation of the southern insurgency and for greater DRVN involvement in it. “The policies of aggression and expansion of the war” of Washington and Saigon “have made the situation in the South extremely dangerous,” Nguyen Van Hien of the National Liberation Front (NLF) told the DRVN national assembly in late 1962. “The war in the South is widening each day and directly threatening the security of the DRVN, directly threatening peace in Indochina and [the rest of] Southeast Asia.”¹⁰ Perhaps sensing the inevitability of a wider war, the National Assembly drew a parallel between the present plight of the DRVN and the recent agony of North Korea: “the Vietnamese people have deep fondness and profound sympathy toward the Korean people” as both their countries were “divided and invaded by the Americans.”¹¹

By late 1962, foreign observers were noting “ominous indications” that “both the guerrilla warfare in the South and the active participation of the North in it may intensify.”¹² In a joint statement in November the DRVN and NLF insisted that “the 16 million North Vietnamese compatriots will support more actively the South Vietnamese compatriots’ liberation struggle.”¹³ The International Control Commission—the organ set up in 1954 to monitor implementation of the Geneva accords on Indochina and consisting of representatives from India, Poland, and Canada—reported that “a number of items of kinds which have been accepted ... in the past as conclusive evidence of subversion south of the 17th parallel by the Northern authorities” had been “given quite openly to assist the [National Liberation] Front in its ‘struggle’” during the last months of 1962.¹⁴ “For the past few weeks,” French diplomats in Hanoi reported on the last day of the year, “the balance traditionally maintained by the DRV between China and the Soviet Union has been affected and the balance is now tilting, more obviously, in favor of the first.”¹⁵ Things were coming to a head in Hanoi and in the rest of Vietnam, and

the outcome of the Cuban crisis had played a not insignificant role in that development.

Recognizing that their Vietnamese allies seemed more amenable than ever to a resumption of war below the seventeenth parallel, Moscow, which remained committed to precluding the outbreak of another major conflagration in Vietnam, dispatched Yuri Andropov to Hanoi in January 1963. Andropov, the head of the CPSU's Department for Liaison with Communist and Workers' Parties in Socialist Countries, pressed upon his hosts the imperative need to act carefully and give the Americans no pretext to involve themselves militarily in the South.¹⁶ "The road to socialism is the road of peace," Andropov told his hosts; "the crisis in the Caribbean Sea region," that is, the Cuban Missile Crisis, "was resolved by peaceful means."¹⁷ Hanoi had therefore to settle its differences with Saigon and the Americans in the same way.

The variance between Andropov's interpretation of the "lessons" of the Cuban crisis and Vietnamese interpretations of the same event underscored the widening "credibility gap" between Moscow and its Vietnamese allies, and those among the latter who espoused hardline positions in particular. Indeed by 1963 hardline views were becoming increasingly popular within the VWP. By the end of the year, in the aftermath of the overthrow of South Vietnamese president Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother and close adviser Ngo Dinh Nhu, hardliners were in control of VWP decision-making, and their first order of business was to sanction all-out war in the South and to effectively embark the DRVN on an irreversible collision course with the United States. Although the Cuban Missile Crisis was not the main reason for that denouement, it was important in authenticating the views of Vietnamese hardliners and invalidating the notion that the crisis in the South could be resolved by negotiations with the Kennedy administration.

Notes

1 This article is based on the author's *Hanoi's Road to the Vietnam War, 1954-65*, forthcoming from the University of California Press.

2 British Consul-General Hanoi (BCGH) to Southeast Asia Department (SEAD), Foreign Office, 3 November 1962; FO 371/166712; The National Archives, United Kingdom (TNAUK), Kew Gardens, England, 1.

3 Sergei Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens: The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 44.

4 Dong's remarks and the western response to them appear in BCGH to SEAD, 3 November 1962, 1.

5 "Tham luan ve tinh hinh Lao, dai bieu Pham-ngoc-Que, Phu-yen" [Address on the Situation in Laos by Representative Pham Ngoc Que of Phu Yen]; Ho so 749: Ho so ky hop thu sau cua QH khoa II tu ngay 28.4.1963 - 08.5.1963. Tap 7: Phien hop ngay 08.5.1963: Tham luan cua DBQH ve dau tranh thong nhat dat nuoc o mien Nam, ve tinh hinh Tay Nguyen, ve tang cuong quan ly kinh te tai chinh, Nghi quyet va bao cao cua CP; Phong Quoc hoi; Vietnam National Archives Center 3, Hanoi [hereafter VNAC3], 4.

6 Balazs Szalontai, *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era: Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism, 1953-1964* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 192.

7 BCGH to SEAD, 3 November 1962, 1.

8 BCGH to SEAD, 1 January 1962; FO 371/166712; TNAUK, 3.

9 BCGH to SEAD, 9 December 1962; FO 371/166712; TNAUK, 1.

10 "Loi chao mung Quoc hoi VNDCCCH cua g.s. Nguyen Van Hien, truong dai bieu MTDTGPMNVN, 23.10.1962 [Welcome Address Before the DRVN National Assembly by Professor Nguyen Van Hien, Head Representative of the NLF, 23 October 1962]; Ho so 740: Ho so ky hop thu nam cua QH khoa II tu ngay 22.27.10.1962. Tap 2: Phien hop ngay 23.10.1962: Bao cao to trinh, Nghi quyet cua QH UBTVQH, PTT ve cong tac cua UBTVQH, ve tong quyet toan ngan sach Nha nuoc, ket qua Hoi nghi Gionevo ve Lao, ve to chuc HDND va UBHC cac cap; Phong Quoc hoi; VNAC3, 4.

11 "Tuyen bo cua QH nuoc VNDCCCH ung ho chu truong cua Hoi nghi nhan dan toi cao nuoc chu nghia dan chu cong hoa Trieu-tien doi de quoc My rut khoi Nam Trieu-tien nham hoa binh thong nhat nuoc Trieu-tien, 27.10.1962 [Declaration by the DRVN National Assembly Supporting the Supreme People's Council of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Demanding the Withdrawal of American Imperialists from South Korea to Bring About the Peaceful Reunification of Korea, 27 October 1962]; Ho so 742: Ho so ky hop thu nam cua QH khoa II tu ngay 22-27.10.1962. Tap 4: Phieu hop ngay 27.10.1962: Tham luan cua DBQH ve to chuc HDND va UBHC cac cap, ve tinh hinh mien Nam va thong nhat nuoc; Phong Quoc hoi; VNAC3.

12 "Report of Visit to North Vietnam by a Delegation of the South Vietnam Liberation National Front (from Canadian Element of the I.C.C.)," 5 November 1962; FO 371/170115; TNAUK, 4-5.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 French General Delegation, Hanoi [hereafter FGDH] to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris [hereafter MFA], 1 January 1963; #74: Asie-Océanie: Vietnam Nord [hereafter AO: VN], Archives Diplomatiques de France, La Courneuve [hereafter ADF], 2.

16 FGDH to MFA, 14 January 1963; #36: AO: VN; ADF, 3 and FGDH to MFA, 21 January 1963; AO: VN; ADF, 1-2.

17 "Dien van cua d/c I.V. An-do-ro-pop, 16.1.63" [Address by Comrade I.V. Andropov, 16 January 1963]; Ho so 1046: Ho so ve doan dai bieu Xo viet toi cao Lien Xo do ong Andropop lam truong doan sang tham Viet Nam tu ngay 12-20.01.1963. Tap 2: Dien van, dien tu va cac loi phat bieu trong thoi gian doan o Viet Nam; Phong Quoc hoi; VNAC3, 4.

Mongolia and the Cuban Missile Crisis

A Glimpse Inside the Ulaanbaatar Archives

Introduction and translation by Sergey Radchenko

Mongolia and Cuba established diplomatic relations in 1960. For both parties, it was like establishing a relationship with the Moon. The only thing that united the two countries was their common adherence to socialism and their common sponsor, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (both ended up high on the list of Soviet aid-recipients, to Moscow's growing frustration, in the 1980s). Still, during the Cold War, the Cubans and the Mongolians found themselves party to some of the same meetings (e.g. Comecon, the anti-Chinese "Interkit,"¹ and of course various gatherings of party secretaries in Moscow), so there was a relationship there that defied purely geographical realities.²

What, if anything, can be gleaned from the now open archives of Cuba's once-upon-a-time socialist ally? The Foreign Ministry Archives in Ulaanbaatar—formerly known as Ulan Bator, "Red Hero," the Russian-ized version, during the Soviet-dominated, communist period from 1924 until the USSR's collapse in 1991—was a natural place to check out the documentary trace of this somewhat artificial relationship.³

I learned (from fond 19, the Cuban "*referentura*") that there was in fact considerable traffic in cables between Ulaanbaatar and Havana from about 1961 onwards. Most cables turned out, on inspection, to be congratulatory messages related to different anniversaries. Mongolian diplomats in Havana had a hard time getting appointments with Cuban officials of respectable level (though there are a few memoranda of conversations with the deputy foreign minister), and the subjects discussed rarely went beyond explaining Mongolia's climatic conditions to the oblivious Cubans. There was one interesting document from August 1962 between the Soviet Ambassador in Cuba, Aleksandr Alekseev, and his Mongolian colleague: Alekseev opined that Mongolia could serve as a model for Cuba, as a country that successfully escaped feudalism. There was apparently no significant communication during the crisis itself, though on 27 October, the "Black Saturday," Mongolia's leader Yumjaagin Tsedenbal called in Cuba's ambassador for a very lengthy discussion of the situation in the Caribbean: in this time of need Tsedenbal wanted to express his sympathy for the Cubans from the other side of the world.

The document presented below is a record of 14 December 1962 conversation between the Mongolian

Ambassador in Moscow Luvsan and the visiting Cuban Minister of Foreign Trade Alberto Mora.⁴ Although ultimately not particularly informative, the document exemplifies the workings of so called "proletarian internationalism": "Although our country is small," Luvsan told Mora, "we will help the Cuban comrades within our possibilities." In his comments to Mora, Luvsan tried to defend the Soviet handling of the crisis against—though he never said so openly—the Chinese allegations of betrayal (which were echoed by some Cubans).⁵ Mongolia then and later served as a pro-Soviet voice in the Third World. Mora avoided polemics and instead brought Luvsan up to date on Cuba's relations with Chile and Brazil. Thus, one is bound to conclude that there is fairly little on Cuba in the Mongolian archives for 1962 (and nothing at all for 1963—the relevant files disappeared!) but the broader point remains relevant: Mongolian diplomats were witness to these events and had something to say. By exploring these documents—like documents of Cuba's other socialist allies—we can gain a better understanding of the dynamic of "fraternal" relationships within the Eastern bloc.



DOCUMENT

Mongolian embassy in Moscow (Lusvan), Record of Conversation between the Mongolian Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Cuba's Minister of Foreign Trade Alberto Mora Becerra, 14 December 1962

EMBASSY OF THE MPR [MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC]
IN THE USSR

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

No. 171

1962-12-14

Content: About a meeting between the minister of foreign trade of Cuba Alberto Mora Becerra and Ambassador Luvsan.

Taking part in the conversation were, from the Cuban side: Ambassador of Cuba in the USSR Arnaldo Peres Pinto, and interpreters, and from our side: deputy trade representative Hishigsuren and interpreters Ilyin and Erdene.

At the beginning of the conversation Ambassador Luvsan asked Alberto Mora Becerra whether he travelled well and whether he likes the Moscow weather. Alberto Mora, after expressing his happiness, asked Ambassador Luvsan how his health was after he had visited Cuba this spring, to which Ambassador Luvsan said that it was great to be in Havana, and that he came back very content. He answered that Cuban air and atmosphere were very suitable for his health.

Alberto—On the occasion of being in Moscow I wanted to talk to you about our two countries' trade discussions. We had our first negotiation in Ulaanbaatar, and the next in Moscow. If possible, we propose to conduct the next round in Havana; what if we invited your representatives?

Luvsan—Our government, seeing [that it was agreed] to conduct trade negotiations in Havana, and that our representatives could not come there, believes that it would be correct to have trade negotiations for 1963 in Havana, and appointed me the head of the trade delegation, on the occasion of my own trip to Cuba to participate in the Cuban [national day] celebration.

This delegation, other than me, will consist of our deputy trade representatives Hishigsuren, and the third will be a technical expert who will come from Ulaanbaatar. Our representatives were invited to your national day celebrations through the channels of public organizations. These representatives, who will come to participate in your [national day] celebration, will be the deputy member of the MPRP Central Committee Politburo, deputy of the State Khural, first secretary of Ulaanbaatar city committee, head of the Mongol-Cuban Friendship Society Luvsanravdan, as the head, and another person.

Alberto—I am very satisfied that you will come to Havana to do trade negotiations.

Luvsan—On the occasion of your being in Moscow, and in order to ease our negotiations in Havana, I would like to hear your main thoughts about what goods could be exchanged [between Mongolia and Cuba].

Alberto—Our trade counselor Arnaldo Peres Pinto will later give you full explanations about this.

Peres—When tomorrow I come to meet with your deputy trade representative Hishigsuren, I will bring a list of our goods in Russian.

Luvsan—We will carefully study your list of goods. Although our country is small, we will help the Cuban comrades within our possibilities.

Alberto—Now, after finishing negotiations in Moscow, I will go to China. Because I may not be able to meet with you in Havana, you will probably conduct negotiations with my deputy Rodriguez. In general, because ministers travel here and there a lot, there is little time to meet.

Luvsan—I know your deputy well. I am happy to conduct negotiations with an old acquaintance comrade Rodriguez. Has the policy of squeezing Cuba, conducted by American imperialism, changed at all?

Alberto—At yesterday's press conference, President Kennedy let it be known that the policy of economic squeeze, conducted with respect to our country, will continue.

Luvsan—During the last crisis, under the wise leadership of comrade N.S. Khrushchev and the victorious leader of the Cuban Revolution Fidel Castro, the Socialist camp, headed by the Soviet Union, and the people who struggle for peace, saved the entire world from the danger of a nuclear war.

Alberto—During the last crisis, our people bravely and heroically struggled against the American aggression. F. Castro, after the crisis, spoke on Havana television. He said: "our people are truly heroic people. I have never been more proud to have been born a son to this people." Other than that, the USSR truly carried out a great duty.

Luvsan—People of every socialist country provide Cuba with all necessary help, and Cuba has friends in all corners of the world. Therefore, I firmly believe that if there is no war, Cuba's difficult questions can all easily be resolved. We understand that Brazil, Mexico, and Chile support Cuba, could you explain what, truly, is their relationship with Cuba?

Alberto—Because the governments of these countries are under the pressure of American imperialism, they are very irresolute. We had a great trade relationship with Chile. But Chile stopped buying our sugar, and buys sugar on the world market at prices that are twice the price of our sugar. For our sugar, we were getting goods from them that do not sell well on the world market—think of it, this [stopping trade with

Cuba] is very harmful to Chile. It is clear what Chile-Cuban relations will be like after the meeting between Kennedy and the Chilean President [Jorge Alessandri Rodriguez] that will take place soon. Mexico and Brazil are also irresolute like this. In general it is difficult to believe any of the governments of Latin America but one can believe the people. For example, even though the Venezuelan government is brutal, the people are well-disposed towards us, and stand on the side of our people.

Luvsan—How was your harvest this year?

Alberto—This year there was more rain in our country compared to previous years. This has had a bad influence on sugar, which has become our main crop, and it looks like this year we will take in less sugar than during the previous years.

Luvsan—In addition to that, the provocative policies of the American imperialists draw considerable force away from peaceful labor, creating obstacles.

Alberto—This of course had a negative influence but while our men hold guns defending the country, women and children successfully gather the harvest.

After the conversation ended, there were friendly parting formalities.

Conversation recorded by: /Erdene/
Checked by Ambassador /Luvsan/

[Mongolian Foreign Ministry Archive, Ulaanbaatar: fond 2, dans 1, kh/n, khuu 84-87. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

Notes

1 On Interkit, see James Hershberg, Sergey Radchenko, Péter Vámos, and David Wolff, “The Interkit Story: A Window into the Final Decades of the Sino-Soviet Relationship,” *CWIHP Working Paper*, No. 63 (April 2011). Mongolia hosted a 1975 meeting of this anti-Chinese, Soviet-led coordinating group, and Radchenko has found its records in the Ulaanbaatar archives—ed.

2 On Mongolian foreign relations and Mongolian-Soviet relations during the Cold War, see Radchenko’s many writings using Mongolian, Russian, and other archival sources, e.g., “Choibalsan’s Great Mongolia Dream,” *Inner Asia*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall 2009), pp. 305-332; “Mongolian Politics in the Shadow of the Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 8, Issue 1 (Winter 2005-06), pp. 95-119; “The Soviets’ Best Friend in Asia: the Mongolian Dimension of the Sino-Soviet Split,” *CWIHP Working Paper*, No. 42 (November 2003); and the section on Mongolia in his forthcoming *Half a Leap Across An Abyss: How Russia Lost Asia, and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013)—ed.

3 For examples of materials now available from the Mongolian archives, especially on the Sino-Soviet split, see Sergey Radchenko, “New Documents on Mongolia and the Cold War,” *CWIHP Bulletin* no. 16 (Fall 2007/Winter 2008), pp. 341-366—ed.

4 Mora may have been in Moscow as part of a delegation led by the head of Cuba’s National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA), Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, a senior communist member of Fidel Castro’s inner circle. For translated Cuban records of Rodriguez’s talks with Nikita Khrushchev on 11-12 December 1962, see elsewhere in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*—ed.

5 For translated Chinese records on the Cuban Missile Crisis, see elsewhere on this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*—ed.