

January 27, 1962

**From the Journal of S.M. Kudryavtsev, 'Record of
Conversation with Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister
of the Republic of Cuba, 3 January 1962'**

Citation:

"From the Journal of S.M. Kudryavtsev, 'Record of Conversation with Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba, 3 January 1962'", January 27, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVP RF, f. 0104, op. 18, p. 121, d. 3, ll. 1-7. Obtained by James G. Hershberg and translated by Gary Goldberg.

<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/177820>

Summary:

Fidel Castro expresses concern regarding US pressure on Latin American countries to isolate Cuba at an upcoming OAS conference.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Transcript - Russian

Translation - English

55

СЕКРЕТНО. Экз. №1
28 февраля 1962 года
Исх. № 58
Из дневника
С.М. КУДРЯВЦЕВА

ЗАПИСЬ БЕСЕДЫ
с премьер-министром Республики Куба
Фиделем КАСТРО РУС

3 февраля 1962 года

Сегодня встретился с Фиделем Кастро в перерыве между заседаниями президиума Объединенных революционных организаций, обсуждавшего окончательный вариант Второй Гаванской декларации.

В соответствии с имевшимся поручением вручил Фиделю Кастро текст приветствия тов. Н.С. Хрущева Второй Генеральной Национальной Ассамблее народа Кубы. Сказал Фиделю Кастро, что мы хотели бы с этим приветствием обратиться к Генеральной Ассамблее и что если он считает это приветствие полезным для кубинской революции и кубинских руководителей, то в этом случае его можно было бы обнародовать, подчеркнув при этом, что решение данного вопроса мы оставляем на усмотрение кубинских руководителей.

Далее мною было сказано, что если кубинские руководители сочтут это приветствие полезным, то они могут считать, что уже получили такую телеграмму и могут публиковать ее по своему усмотрению, заметив при этом, что, разумеется, текст будет им прислать клером из Москвы.

Фидель Кастро, который принял меня в присутствии президента Дортикоса, сказал, что он горячо одобряет и поддерживает идею тов. Н.С. Хрущева обратиться к Генеральной Национальной Ассамблее народа Куба с такого рода приветствием. Мне хотелось бы просить Вас, заметил Фидель Кастро, пользуясь этим случаем, передать тов. Н.С. Хрущеву мою искреннюю благодарность за это новое проявление солидарности и столь эффективную поддержку кубинской революции.

Внимательно ознакомившись с текстом приветствия, Фидель Кастро подчеркнул, что, по его мнению, это важный стратегический

56

шаг, который будет иметь большое политическое значение. Это приветствие, заметил он, не только полезно для Кубы, но оно в действительности оказывает как руководству, так и всему кубинскому народу неоценимую поддержку в нужный момент.

Далее Фидель Кастро, посоветовавшись с Дортикосом, который также горячо одобрил идею обращения тов. Н.С. Хрущева с приветствием к Генеральной Национальной Ассамблее народа Кубы, попросил, если возможно, опустить в тексте следующую фразу: «В результате замысел врагов кубинского народа сорвать конференцию в Пунта дель Эсте фактически провалился».

Фидель Кастро мотивировал эту свою просьбу следующим обстоятельством. В его выступлении 4 февраля он, Фидель Кастро, намерен призвать народы Кубы и Латинской Америки к борьбе против решений совещания в Пунта дель Эсте. Ряд решений этого совещания, подчеркнул он, таит в себе опасность не столько для самой Кубы, сколько для национально-освободительного движения латиноамериканских народов. Поэтому необходимо мобилизовать максимально широкие слои общественности стран Латинской Америки на борьбу с этими решениями, чтобы не допустить их практической реализации. Фидель Кастро заметил в этой связи, что он опасается, что сохранение этой фразы в тексте приветствия может создать известные противоречия с его выступлением. Главное, однако, чтобы сохранение этой фразы, продолжал он, не создало у кубинского народа неправильных иллюзий о том, что, мол, все хорошо и теперь можно почивать на лаврах. В остальном, подчеркнул Фидель Кастро, он считает текст приветствия очень хорошим и уверен, что весь кубинский народ горячо поддержит его. Наш народ, сказал Фидель Кастро, будет очень обрадован этим новым заявлением тов. Н.С. Хрущева о том, что народы Советского Союза вместе с Кубой.

57

Со своей стороны сказал Фиделю Кастро, что немедленно поставлю в известность Советское правительство об этом его пожелании и по получении ответа его информирую. Условились встретиться с ним по этому вопросу до начала Ассамблеи.

Примечание: На следующий день перед началом Ассамблеи сообщил Фиделю Кастро о нашей согласии снять упомянутую выше фразу.

ПОСОЛ СССР В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ КУБА

(С. КУДРЯВЦЕВ)

SECRET. Copy № 1
27 January 1962
Outgoing № 30

FROM THE JOURNAL OF
S. M. KUDRYAVTSEV

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with Fidel CASTRO RUZ, Prime Minister
of the Republic of Cuba

3 January 1962

I met with Fidel Castro this evening and in accordance with instructions [I had] I talked with him about the following questions.

In the conversation I said that quite a few information reports have come from Soviet diplomatic missions and through other channels in connection with the upcoming consultative conference of ministers of foreign affairs of OAS member countries. I continued, of course we do not vouch for the reliability of all this information. However, a number of reports received by our representatives deserve attention.

According to this information the US is persistently and actively working on the governments of the Latin American countries, setting the goal of achieving the foreign policy isolation of the Republic of Cuba and pushing through a decision at the conference above about collective sanctions with respect to Cuba. When doing this the Americans are devoting special attention to Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Ecuador, Chile, and Bolivia, that is, those countries which until recently have defended the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Cuba. The US is using the means at their disposal to put economic and political pressure on these countries, organize pressure on the Latin American countries from reactionary pro-American groups, blackmail these governments with the threat of military coups in the event they do not follow American policy, etc. For example, Chester Bowles, the group of Senator Mansfield, and Senator [Mazars - SIC] who recently visited Mexico persistently urged the Mexican government to reexamine its position with respect to Cuba. Means of economic pressure, in particular the removal of American capital from Mexican banks and the sphere of economic activity as a whole, are also being used to influence Mexico.

I continued, from the reports of our embassies it follows that the governments of some Latin American countries, Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico in particular, have begun to exhibit some vacillation in determining their position at the upcoming conference of ministers of foreign affairs. According to available information in certain conditions the Brazilian government might yield to the US to some degree on the question of Brazil joining the decision of collective sanctions against Cuba. There are differences on the Cuban question in the Mexican government. In particular, as they note, Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs Tello has recently begun to take an insufficiently favorable position with respect to Cuba.

I noted that in confidential conversations with our diplomats the national leaders and diplomats of Latin American countries cautiously but quite persistently pursued the thought that it is now considerably more difficult for the governments of several countries to uphold and argue their favorable policy with respect to Cuba and it is more difficult to beat back the attacks of reactionary, pro-American circles. Such a situation might develop in these countries in which the supporters of non-interference in the internal affairs of Cuba will be forced to yield to the pressure from the US. As a

result, a number of countries might begin to slide down to a path of not resisting the American policy with respect to Cuba. Of course, our diplomats are giving appropriate explanations in connection with such statements, but quite often their interlocutors remain of their opinion.

In the course of further conversation I said that some of the interlocutors, who have a benevolent attitude toward Cuba on the whole, maintain the need for the Cuban government to take appropriate political steps which would be directed at not allowing a turning point in the attitudes of the governments and political circles of Brazil, Mexico, Ecuador, Chile, and others which would be unfavorable to Cuba. The international situation points to the desirability of the Cuban government more fully taking into consideration the complex and tense internal political situation in these countries. They call the position of Cuba at the recent inter-American economic conference in Punta del Este an example of such an effective and farsighted policy.

I continued, the opinion is also expressed that it would be useful to publish a special statement of the Cuban government on the eve of the conference. Stress in the statement that the government of Cuba has none of the intentions ascribed to it to interfere in the affairs of the other Latin American countries or to engage in the export of revolution or to impose their political and social system on them. Such a statement would put the necessary arguments in the hands of the governments who speak in support of Cuba which they could use at the conference in defense of the Cuban Revolution. In particular, in a confidential conversation Minister of Foreign Affairs Dantas stressed that the situation requires a statement from the Cuban government which would make support of Cuba easier.

In the concluding part of the conversation I expressed the hope that the information I reported to Fidel Castro would turn out to be useful for our Cuban friends in working out tactics on the eve of and during the conference of ministers of foreign affairs of OAS member countries.

Having closely heard me out Fidel Castro said that this information is indisputably of interest and it needs to be carefully thought over and taken into consideration when the Cuban government works out the tactics at the upcoming conference of ministers of foreign affairs of OAS member countries. Fidel Castro continued, we know about the great pressure on Mexico and Brazil from the US, which has the goal of changing their benevolent position with respect to Cuba. However, Fidel Castro stressed, it is just this pressure and solicitations of the US that insult the feelings of national dignity of Brazil and especially Mexico. In recent days Mexico has begun to take an even more benevolent position with regard to Cuba, in spite of American pressure, and has assured the Cuban government that its representative at the conference of ministers of foreign affairs of OAS member countries at Punta del Este on 22 January will vigorously oppose the Colombian proposals which have the goal of preparing the ground for the subsequent adoption of collective sanctions against Cuba. Some days ago, in response to US pressure President Lopez Mateos made a new statement in which he stressed the unchanged loyalty of Mexico to the principle of self-determination and non-interference.

Fidel Castro continued, the position of Chile will be favorable insofar as far as can be judged from his recent conversation with Chilean Senator Juan Luis Mauras, who arrived with a Chilean delegation for the celebration of the third anniversary of the Cuban revolution. Referring to an instruction of the Chilean government, Fidel Castro said further, Senator Mauras told him that Chile will categorically object to the conference's adoption of any decisions hostile to Cuba and will act together with Brazil and Mexico on these questions.

Fidel Castro stressed, the Bolivian government has assured us that it also will uphold the principles of self-determination and non-interference in the affairs of one another,

and also the right of each Latin American country to independent development.

Ecuador will hardly decide to oppose Cuba for domestic considerations. Fidel Castro continued, an attempt by Ecuador to break off relations with Cuba encountered sharp resistance from public organizations and the broad popular masses of Ecuador. As a result Arosemena had to retreat.

Fidel Castro declared, we think that Argentina will also hardly openly act against Cuba, considering the favorable position of Mexico, Brazil, and Chile. As is well known, Frondizi refused to receive [Olivares]. However, the fact that the next day through his representative Frondizi sent the Cuban Embassy a letter in which he declared he did not receive Olivares only because questions of preparing for the conference of ministers of foreign affairs are exclusively in the competence of the Argentine minister of foreign affairs calls attention to itself. He verbally passed on that he could not receive Olivares in connection with the fact that the Argentinian MFA had already published a report without his knowledge that Frondizi would not receive Olivares. In this same letter, continued Fidel Castro, Frondizi assured Olivares that Argentina would remain faithful to the principles of self-determination and non-interference in the affairs of one another.

In our opinion, said Fidel Castro, the situation which is developing before the conference in Punta del Este is on the whole not bad for Cuba, and the US will not be able to take action about collective sanctions. He continued, we think that the US will decide not to split the Organization of American States, inasmuch as they know that Mexico and Brazil will not agree to the adoption of anti-Cuban resolutions. Therefore we think that evidently the US introduce a resolution of a general nature at the conference in Punta del Este through its puppets. In addition, the President of Guatemala Ydigoras, on whom the US is counting most, upset their applecart with his New Year's speech. For the first time Ydigoras openly declared that at the order of the United States he had been training the forces of the Cuban counterrevolutionaries which then made an armed attack on Cuba in April 1961. Ydigoras explained the failure of this operation by the fact that at the last moment the US refused to support the assault force of counterrevolutionaries which had been landed with their air force and navy.

Fidel Castro stressed, the Cuban delegation will take a constructive position at the conference of ministers of foreign affairs at Punta del Este and speak from joint coordinated positions with Brazil and Mexico. The Cuban government has already turned to the governments of Mexico and Brazil through their ambassadors in Havana for the latter to influence Argentina and try to achieve its agreement to act in a united front at Punta del Este. When travelling through Rio de Janeiro Raul Roa agreed with Tello and Dantas on the common plan of action at the upcoming conference, about which we have an agreement with the Brazilians.

In further conversation I asked Fidel Castro the question about whether the Cuban government intended to address a request to the governments of the neutral countries of Asia and Africa with which Cuba has established close and friendly relations and also some countries of Latin America to speak in support of the Republic of Cuba on the eve of the OAS conference of ministers of foreign affairs. I further said that, in our opinion, it seems that it is very important right now to attract the attention of world public opinion to the US maneuvers to hammer together an anti-Cuban coalition of Latin American countries. I also stressed that it is very important to create such a situation around the conference of ministers of foreign affairs which would complicate the US's pushing through collective sanctions against Cuba.

Fidel Castro said in reply that the Cuban government has already given instructions to the ambassadors to hold appropriate conversations on this question with the heads

of the governments of the neutral countries of Asia and Africa and to try to secure their support.

Then, referring to his speech of 2 January, Fidel Castro stressed that it actually predetermined the Cuban government's policy at the upcoming conference in Punta del Este. Fidel Castro noted, I intentionally stressed that Cuba had never threatened anyone and does not plan to make threats, and that its armed forces are intended exclusively for defensive purposes. Fidel Castro said, at the same time for the first time I made the distinction in such a clear form between the governments of the countries of Latin America which favor the conduct of an independent policy and the puppet governments. My speech also pursued the thought that revolution cannot be exported and brought at bayonet point, inasmuch as revolution is a consequence of the domestic social development of each country, and not of armed interference from without.

In conclusion Fidel Castro again stressed that the Cuban delegation will take a constructive position at the conference of ministers of foreign affairs at Punta del Este and act in concert with the delegations of Mexico and Brazil in order not to provide the Americans an opportunity to push through a resolution hostile to Cuba which could be consequently used by the US to organize an intervention against the Cuban government.

Fidel Castro noted in this connection that the impressive military parade which was held on the occasion of the third anniversary of the Cuban revolution will force the ruling circles of some Latin American countries which are puppets of the US to think again, as well as [force] the reactionary circles of the US itself to have second thoughts. This parade will to some degree dampen their desire to organize new interventions against Cuba. It will give still greater confidence to the Cuban people, who now know that they have the means to defend their independence and to dampen the enthusiasm of both the internal as well as the external counterrevolution.

For my part, I said in conclusion that the Soviet government will, of course, give complete assistance to the foreign policy steps of the Cuban government directed at disrupting the aggressive ideas of the US with respect to revolutionary Cuba.

The rest of the conversation touched on general questions of a domestic political nature, information concerning which I have reported earlier.

USSR AMBASSADOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA (S. KUDRYAVTSEV)