

January 31, 1968

**SED CC Department of International Relations,
'Information on the Third Plenum of the Central
Committee of the Cuban Communist Party and on
the Attacks of the Cuban Communist Party against
the Socialist Unity Party of Germany'**

Citation:

"SED CC Department of International Relations, 'Information on the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party and on the Attacks of the Cuban Communist Party against the Socialist Unity Party of Germany'", January 31, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Bundesarchiv Berlin, DY 30, IV A 2/20/265. Obtained for CWIHP by Piero Gleijeses and translated for CWIHP by Christian Ostermann.
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/115812>

Summary:

The 3rd Plenum of the Cuban Communist Party took place in Havana on 24-26 January 1968. During the Plenum the decision of the Politburo of the CC was announced not to participate in the consultative meeting in Budapest. Fidel Castro held a 12-hour long speech.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

The 3rd Plenum of the Cuban Communist Party took place in Havana on 24-26 January 1968. During the Plenum the decision of the Politburo of the CC was announced not to participate in the consultative meeting in Budapest. Fidel Castro gave a 12-hour long speech, which has not yet been published.

The main subject of the 3rd Plenum of the CC was the uncovering of a so-called micro faction within the party. The Second Secretary of the CP of Cuba and head of the Commission for the Armed Forces and Security Questions, Comrade Raoul [Raúl] Castro, dealt with this issue in an extensive presentation. The head of this "micro facto" is said to be Anibal Escalante, who previously belonged to the Politburo of the Socialist People's Party [PSP] and afterwards had been the Organization Secretary of the "United Revolutionary Organizations of Cuba" (ORI) until 1962. Escalante was expelled from the party in 1962 as a "sectarian."

36 former members of the Socialist People's Party also belong to the Anibal Escalante group. According to Western news they were sentenced to long prison sentences.

The group is basically accused of the following crimes:

It spread the claim "that a strong anti-Soviet current existed in the leadership of the CP of Cuba which hurt the Cuban revolution and that the USSR was the country that should exercise dominance" (Quotes from the speech of Raoul Castro).

"They welcomed the departure of Cmdte Ernesto ["Che"] Guevara Serna as they were of the opinion that Cmdte Guevara was one of the most vehement opponents of Soviet policy and a proponent of Chinese positions."

"They were of the opinion that the small bourgeoisie was the predominant force within the policy of the revolution."

They accused the leadership of an "incipient rapprochement with the capitalist countries," which "seriously harmed the trade relations between our country and those of the socialist camp."

Some of the groups [sic!] were of the opinion that thanks to the wise policy of the USSR not only war was avoided with the withdrawal of the missiles and the letter by Nikita Khrushchev but it was guaranteed for a long time that the imperialist would not attack."

"They opposed the armed struggle in general, using the lack of objective or subjective conditions as a pretext. They were of the opinion that war, such as it is being waged in Venezuela, was adventurous."

[...]

IV. Assessment

The 3rd Plenum of the CC of the Communist Party of Cuba served the consolidation and the expansion of the un-Marxist, anti-Soviet, and petit-bourgeoisie-adventurist political line of the Cuban leadership internally and externally.

It is being openly demonstrated that any opinion that deviates from the views of the Cuban party leadership or any attempt at a Marxist critique of its views is to be qualified as counter-revolutionary and persecuted as a crime. Thus anti-Soviet, anti-Marxist behavior is de facto elevated to the official state view in Cuba. The internal opposition evidently reaches beyond the 36 identified persons. It has

apparently taken on considerable range.

The tendency already evident in the actions of Cuban leaders thus far to implement a policy independent of the international communist movement and in its general line antagonistic is newly and openly demonstrated at the 3rd plenum of the CC of the CP of Cuba.

These measures are the sharpest public attacks yet against the CPSU, the SED, and other fraternal parties. They are a continuation of the anti-Marxist and nationalist line which was developed at the three-continent [tri-continental] conference and the "International Intellectual Congress" in Havana as well as in the attacks on the fraternal parties of Latin America.

The severe splittist provocation of the 3rd Plenum of the CC of the CP of Cuba is aimed directly against the consultative meeting in Budapest and the successful preparation of the world conference. The CPSU and the SED are to be discredited before world public opinion. This intention is unequivocally evident in the fact that the accusations were not - as is customary between fraternal parties - resolved internally but instantly and massively by the method of surprise brought into the public.

V. Conclusions

1. The Cuban ambassador in the GDR is to be invited by the head of the International Relations Department of the [SED] CC for a discussion. It should be attempted to convey to the CC of the CP of Cuba the deep sense of reservation of the SED CC over these actions. The SED CC expects a correction in the form of a public confirmation of the flawless and correct behavior of the GDR citizens who were named in the report to the CC of the CP of Cuba. This is necessary to guarantee the proper work of GDR citizens in Cuba in the interest of both countries. With guarantees that such incidents would not be repeated the completion of the printing press is not possible [handwritten correction to "put into question"]. The CC of the CP of Cuba is requested to hand over to the SED CC the materials allegedly incriminating the GDR citizens.

2. It is necessary to consult with the comrades in the CPSU leadership immediately.

3. The fraternal [communist] parties of the CSSR [Czechoslovakia], Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Korea, Vietnam, France, Italy, Spain, Finland, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, Columbia,, and Venezuela are to be given internal information.

[...]