

November 23, 1961

**From the Journal of N.A. Belous, 'Record of a
Conversation with Prime Minister of the Republic of
Cuba Fidel Castro Ruz, 6-7 October 1961'**

Citation:

"From the Journal of N.A. Belous, 'Record of a Conversation with Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba Fidel Castro Ruz, 6-7 October 1961'", November 23, 1961, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVP RF, F. 0104. Op. 17, P. 118, D. 5, Il. 4-7. Obtained by James G. Hershberg and translated by Gary Goldberg.

<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/188154>

Summary:

Fidel Castro discusses the extent of internal counterrevolution in Cuba, which he suggests is driven by American pressures in Latin America.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

from the journal of
N. A. BELOUS
Secret. Copy № 2
23 November 1961
№ 344

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba
Fidel Castro Ruz
6 and 7 October 1961

I met with Fidel Castro at a reception at the Czechoslovak Embassy (6 October), at a reception held by the GDR mission on the occasion of the national holiday (7 October), and at a concert of the Soviet Army Ensemble on 7 October.

During the conversations which took place Fidel Castro expressed great satisfaction at the results of the trip of the Dorticos delegation to the USSR and asked [me] to pass [his] gratitude to the Soviet government for the attention with which it was enveloped [okruzhen] to the delegation by the USSR and the agreement of the Soviet government to buy such a large quantity of Cuban sugar at prices below world [prices], despite its needs and plans in the period from 1962 to 1965, and also for understanding the defense needs of Cuba and corresponding aid in this question.

In the course of the conversation Fidel Castro noted that during the last four weeks the government had taken a number of harsh measures against the internal counterrevolution which, following instructions from Washington, had begun to raise [its] head to openly act against the Cuban people, float provocative and slanderous rumors about the goals and intentions of the Cuban government, and organize acts of terrorism, sabotage, and subversion. For example, on 10 and 17 September the Phalangist-Catholic reactionaries made attempts in Havana and other cities of the country to conduct organized anti-government actions, using religious holidays as a pretext for this. In the middle of September copies of forgeries, which the counterrevolution tried to pass off as laws of the Cuban government, were distributed in great quantity in Havana and other places. These forgeries reported that the state supposedly intended to take school-age children from the parents. During the same period a number of time bombs placed by counterrevolutionary elements in public places, stores, etc. were found and disarmed.

A number of specially-trained saboteurs were sent to the territory of the country from the US and other places by aircraft, sea, and the Guantanamo Naval Base in order to organize and carry out counterrevolutionary activity in Cuba.

In connection with the open act of the internal counterrevolution the government has decided to deal it a crushing blow. Fidel Castro said, the open acts of the counterrevolutionary elements have given the ministry of internal affairs an opportunity to find and neutralize a number of counterrevolutionary cells, the leaders and bosses of which are as a rule, shot.

Fidel Castro stressed at the same time that the counterrevolution does not have any significant support [from] the population in the country, and does not have a substantial social base. It operates piecemeal, and does not have an overall leadership inside the country.

Analyzing its own activity, the internal counterrevolution counts on using certain

economic difficulties which have been created inside the country, including the question of the supply of the population with individual essential products and goods, and plays up the dissatisfaction which exists in this connection among some petty bourgeois circles. At this time Fidel Castro pointed to the fact that the counterrevolution is striving to scare the petty and middle bourgeoisie, floating rumors that the government is allegedly intending to confiscate their property. Recently counterrevolutionary elements have increased subversive work in the militia in order to introduce confusion in its ranks.

Fidel Castro stressed, the stepping up of the activity of the internal counterrevolution coincides with the increase of American pressure on Latin American countries in order to force them to break diplomatic relations with Cuba and adopt collective sanctions against it. The US has increased the training of mercenary invasion forces, both on its own territory, as well as in other countries such as Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, and other places. The increase of provocative acts against Cuba demonstrates the serious intention of the Kennedy government to launch an armed intervention against Cuba which, in Fidel Castro's words, might be undertaken in the immediate future inasmuch as the personnel and other resources for this aggression have already been prepared. At the same time Fidel Castro stressed that the timeframe for an invasion of Cuba depends in large degree on the development of the overall international situation and, in particular, on a solution of the Berlin question, as one of the most acute [questions] at the present time.

In spite of the recent intensification of the activities of the internal counterrevolution they nevertheless have notably less scope than they had before the intervention in April of this year, as Fidel Castro said.

During the conversation with Fidel Castro he also pointed to the fact that Cuba's situation at the present time is many times stronger than before the landing of the counterrevolutionary assault group at Playa Giron, both from the morale and political point of view as well as the military [point of view]. Much organizational work has been done in the army to the present time in which discipline has been strengthened, combat readiness increased, and the personnel of the army have mastered the new weapons which have arrived in the country at an accelerated pace. Much work to train the command staff has recently been done.

The Cuban leadership has launched much work to organize the activity of the government apparatus, is fighting bureaucratic attitudes, and is strengthening discipline at factories, mills, and other enterprises in order to increase a feeling of responsibility so that each worker and employee is responsible for the sector of work assigned to him, strives to exhibit initiative and a revolutionary consciousness, and seeks to increase labor productivity as much as possible.

Fidel Castro expressed confidence that the implementation of all these measures will allow the Cuban people, the majority of whom are ready to sooner die than abandon the achievements of the revolution, repel a new aggression, although at the present time aggression is being prepared on a significantly larger scale than occurred before the April events.

During these conversations Fidel Castro referred to the fact that he had done much intensive work recently and intended to leave Havana for several days to get some rest inasmuch as then, as he expects, much intensive work lies ahead both in the domestic policy as well as foreign policy fields.

Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in the Republic of Cuba
(N. BELOUS)