

October 1962

Notes of N.S. Khrushchev [on a Letter to Fidel Castro]

Citation:

"Notes of N.S. Khrushchev [on a Letter to Fidel Castro]", October 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, f. 52, op. 1, d. 600, l. 8. Contributed by Sergey Radchenko and translated by Gary Goldberg. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/300937>

Summary:

N.S. Khrushchev reflects on Fidel Castro's impulsive and desperate nature, comparing him to a peasant who values a bear's skin over his own safety, illustrating Castro's dangerous push for nuclear war during the Cuban Crisis.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Notes of N.S. Khrushchev

(Before the dictation of a letter to Fidel Castro on 30 October 1962 by the end of the Cuban Crisis)

I have read the summary of the Ministry of Defense, and they write that there are no flights over Cuba. It is obvious that they have taken my statement to the President into consideration.

Castro is a surprising person. I talked to him over lunch and recalled a verse on this subject. In childhood I loved poems and they were easy for me. The teacher always knew that if she gave me one, then I learned two. The poem is this: a peasant and a hired hand were going home to a village one summer evening from harvesting hay and met a bear in the forest face to face; the man didn't even have time to gasp when the bear sprang upon him, turned him over, twisting him, only choosing where to break him [next]. The peasant begged the hired hand. The hired hand chopped off the bear's head with an ax. The man stood up and scolded the hired hand right there: he was in a hurry, what was the fool happy about, he ruined the entire bearskin.

He needed a bearskin! Castro is the same. Yesterday he sent us a suggestion to begin a nuclear war, and this is because he was desperate. This is already not for lack of a better alternative. That there will be an invasion of Cuba in November. Now they say that the acceptance of these terms...is it temporary insanity or witlessness? That the Chinese were worried for us because of this whole squabble that the Russians had pulled them into this and would unleash a nuclear war...

In a word, we have concluded this operation and the goal which was set has been achieved, that is, we wrung a statement from America that they will not invade and will restrain others from invading Cuba.

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