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**From the Journal of A.I. Alekseyev, 'Record of a
Conversation with Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister
of the Republic of Cuba, 28 February 1963'**

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Summary:

Fidel Castro praises recent CPSU CC letters and a report that Soviet military equipment will remain in Cuba, and Alekseyev informs him of a tense interaction with the PRC ambassador and of an upcoming public report of the withdrawal of Soviet military specialists.

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from the journal of
A. I. ALEKSEYEV

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION

with Fidel CASTRO RUZ, Prime Minister
of the Republic of Cuba

28 February 1963

I met with F. Castro at his request.

□□ delivered CPSU CC letters to Castro. Closely reading them in my presence, he said that today both letters will be brought to the attention of the National Leadership of the ORO to make a decision about them.

□□

In Castro's opinion It would be more correct to discuss the questions touched upon in the letters during his trip to the Soviet Union.

Commenting on the letters, Castro declared that they are suffused with the spirit of comradeship and demonstrate the CPSU's desire to solve contentious issues and preserve unity in the world Communist movement. Then he said that he does not approve the conduct of the Chinese, who responded to the CPSU CC call for unity with an article in the newspaper Zhenmin Ribao containing sharp criticism of the CPSU and personal attacks on Cde. Khrushchev.

At this point I took advantage of the opportunity and told Fidel about how the PRC ambassador expressed his displeasure to me about the presence of the ambassador of Yugoslavia at the Soviet Embassy reception on 25 February. I also told him that the ambassador of Albania does not visit our receptions in spite of the invitations we have sent, and returns TASS bulletins sent him. Then I told Castro about the provocative reports which are appearing in a Xinhua bulletin (about the deliveries of Soviet MIG fighters to India, and about the withdrawal of a unit of the Soviet servicemen from Cuba).

Castro expressed his displeasure at the actions of the Chinese and asked to whom and in what quantity they send their bulletin.

I replied to Fidel that I don't know the circulation of the bulletin, but in all probability it is not [just] one thousand, inasmuch as very often the leaders of mass organizations, students, private individuals, etc. come to us, referring to the abundance of Xinhua bulletins, and ask [us] to increase the dispatch of the TASS bulletin. I said, we send several hundred of our bulletins to newspapers, state institutions, and the leaders of revolutionary organizations, and, [while] not planning to compete with the Chinese, we do not fulfill many requests.

Castro clearly regarded the last statement approvingly.

□□ Castro expressed his deep satisfaction with the speeches of N. S. Khrushchev and Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky. He said that these speeches were greeted by the

entire Cuban people with deep enthusiasm. Castro noted, they will be taken positively by the progressive circles of Latin America and are a deterrent for the American rulers. At the same time Fidel expressed his doubt that the hawkish circles will reduce pressure on Kennedy and the propaganda against Cuba.

□□

Castro asked he be sent the full texts of the speeches when we receive them. We also arranged for the publication of these speeches in an attachment to the magazine "USSR" which is published here.

□□ Fidel Castro said that he was satisfied with the report of Cde. Pavlov that our military equipment will remain in Cuba, and also part of [our] forces for such time as is necessary. He stressed that even the symbolic presence of our troops in Cuba will tie the Americans' hands. In these conditions they will not dare intervene, especially after the statements made by Cdes. Khrushchev and Malinovsky. However, continued Castro, the Soviet military personnel should be legalized by an open military agreement, perhaps as specialists training the Cuban army.

□□

□□ On instructions from Moscow [Tsentri] I informed Fidel Castro about our intention to publish a report in Pravda about the departure of the Soviet military specialists. He did not object to the publication of such a report in the Soviet Union, and said that he completely shares our point of view about this question. At the same time he noted that no such report on this question ought to be published in the Cuban press.

□□

Castro said further that one of the representatives of the Cuban General Staff could be sent to the ship for the farewell ceremony to make the tasks of the journalist easier and his statement used in an article. This would be a public confirmation of the coordination of actions between the Soviet Union and Cuba about the withdrawal of the Soviet specialists. He also noted that it would be advisable to talk about the transfer of Soviet military equipment in the reporting, too, without naming it, and that the Cuban personnel have successfully mastered it.

Having heard my arguments about the advisability of publishing any information about the departure of the specialists in the Cuban press Castro said that maybe [they] ought to think about placing part of Cde. Gaydar's article in local newspapers after its publication in the Soviet Union.

□□ asked Fidel Castro how he had decided the question of his trip to the Soviet Union. He replied that, if no extraordinary events prevent this, he is planning this trip for the beginning of April, intending to vacation at least 7-10 days together with N. S. Khrushchev and A. I. Mikoyan and then to attend the May 1st holiday [celebration] in Moscow.

□□

Castro asked until exactly what time would Cde. N. S. Khrushchev be in Pitsunda in order to better calculate his time. He also said that, in his opinion, the report about the trip ought to be published only on the eve of departure.

USSR AMBASSADOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA □ (A. ALEKSEYEV)