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**From the Journal of S.M. Kudryavtsev, 'Record of a
Conversation with Prime Minister Fidel Castro Ruz,
27 April 1961'**

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Summary:

Kudryavtsev delivers a letter to Fidel Castro notifying him of the awarding of the International Lenin Prize "For Strengthening Peace Between Peoples" to Castro. They then discuss Kennedy's plans for military intervention in Cuba.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with Prime Minister Fidel CASTRO RUZ

27 April 1961

I met with Fidel Castro on the night of 27 April and delivered a letter to him from Cde. Skobel'tsyn in which it reported the awarding of the International Lenin Prize, "For Strengthening Peace Between Peoples" to Fidel Castro.

Fidel Castro was very happy and touched at this report. He requested that his sincere and cordial gratitude be passed to the International Committee for the Lenin Prizes for awarding him this high prize. While he was doing this Fidel Castro stressed that henceforth, especially in the current tense situation, he will tirelessly fight of the cause of peace together with the Soviet Union.

Fidel Castro noted that he will officially announce the award of the International Lenin Prize during the 1 May demonstration. He said, this report will be taken very well by the Cuban people, and will still further deepen its sympathy for the Soviet Union.

Fidel Castro said that he prefers to receive the Lenin Prize in the Soviet Union. This would be a good reason to visit Moscow. However, noted Fidel Castro, I would like to put off a final reply for some time until the situation becomes clear. It seems to me that everything will become clear in a week or 10 days: either Kennedy will attack us or he will have to abandon these reckless plans for some time.

In the course of further conversation some questions were touched upon which were associated with the hostile actions of the US against Cuba which were launched by the American government right after the defeat of the counterrevolutionary bands in the region of the port of Giron by the forces of the revolutionary army and the people's militia.

Fidel Castro said in this connection, the Cuban government is forming the impression that Kennedy essentially began military preparations to organize a direct invasion of Cuba by the US armed forces. The concentration of naval vessels around Cuba and Marines in the base of Guantanamo attests to this; increased flyovers of Cuban territory by American military aircraft continue; and Marines in Puerto Rico and the base of Guantanamo are not being given leave. In recent days, already after the defeat of the counterrevolutionary bands, the Americans have considerably reinforced their military garrisons at the base in Guantanamo and also transferred the remnants of the counterrevolutionaries there.

Besides the purely military preparations Kennedy is pressuring the countries of Latin America, demanding they agree to a collective breaking off of diplomatic relations with Cuba. Kennedy is seeking the removal of the Cuban representative from the International Defense Junta [SIC]. Constant conferences are going on between Kennedy and the leading representatives of both parties and military leaders.

Fidel Castro noted, the new statement by Kennedy of 26 April clearly shows that,

although he is also meeting resistance to his disastrous policy with respect to Cuba inside the US itself, in particular from the biggest newspapers, nevertheless, he has not abandoned his plans for direct military intervention against Cuba. Obviously, he will invent some sort of pretext for these purposes like, for example, an "attack" by the Cubans on the American base in Guantanamo. Of course, Fidel Castro noted, now no one will believe Kennedy's lies and the world will be in solidarity with Cuba, as before.

The revolutionary government has taken every step not to give any pretext for armed interference by the Americans. The necessary measures have been taken to strengthen the defense of Havana and other strategic points of the country. Fidel Castro stressed, the revolutionary army and people's militia have taken up combat positions, and we are confident that in the event of their invasion American troops will meet with a heroic and stubborn resistance from all the Cuban people. In spite of the superiority of the Americans they cannot occupy Cuba in several days, as they are counting on. The Cuban armed forces and the entire Cuban people will fight for each house, for each sliver [pyat' -SIC, vice pyad'] of our land.

Fidel Castro said, we hope that maybe Kennedy will listen to reason, although imperialism at the very moment of defeat is most dangerous, since it might take even crazier steps.

The rest of the conversation had a general nature. Castro repeatedly returned to the question of the award of the Lenin Prize to him, saying that he would immediately inform President Dorticos and the leadership of the NSP of this. Again and again he stressed that he perceives this prize not as a personal recognition of his merits, but as recognition of the contribution of the Cuban people to the cause of the preservation of world peace.

For my part I congratulated Fidel Castro on the award of the Lenin Peace Prize to him and wished him success in his noble activity for the good of the Cuban people.

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