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**From the Journal of S.M. Kudryavtsev, 'Record of a
Conversation with Prime Minister of the Republic of
Cuba Fidel Castro Ruz, 4 July 1961'**

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Summary:

Kudryavtsev informs Fidel Castro that the Soviet Union has decided to increase its aid of edible fats to Cuba in the wake of the US embargo on fats.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba Fidel Castro Ruz

4 July 1961

I visited Fidel Castro in the presidential palace and, in accordance with instructions [I] had, informed him that the Soviet government, desiring to give the Cuban aid, had decided to increase the deliveries of edible fats to Cuba in 1961 by 10,000 tons.

In reply Fidel Castro said that first of all he would like to ask me to pass the Soviet government his cordial gratitude for this new magnanimous step dictated by a desire to help Cuba get out of the difficult situation in which it has found itself as a result of a complete embargo on the supply of fats introduced by the US.

Fidel Castro continued, this decision of the Soviet government will help us considerably in solving the problem of supplying the population with fats and avoid the initial plan of giving out fats only to children and [military] hospitals. In my television speech today, Fidel Castro further stressed, I will tell the people without fail about this magnanimous decision of the Soviet government. The Cuban people, and well understanding anyway how it is obliged to the Soviet Union and its people, are inspired by even greater respect and a feeling of deep sympathies for it. Fidel Castro continued, the new aggressive act of American imperialism, striving to stir up the Cuban people against the revolutionary government through a hunger blockade, will not bring Kennedy the desired results, but on the contrary will help us rally the people together to rebuff future American provocations.

It is very good, Fidel Castro noted further, that you informed me about the decision of the Soviet government before my television speech, inasmuch as this provide an opportunity to somewhat restructure it, but the main thing is to again stress the enormous role of the Soviet Union in supporting the Cuban people. Fidel Castro continued, in my speech I will dwell in detail on the role of the Soviet Union which it plays in ensuring the independent existence of the young Cuban state. In this speech I will explain again the individual stages of the aggressive actions of the US against revolutionary Cuba and show how with the aid of the Soviet Union the revolutionary government has overcome the difficulties from which previously there was no escape at all. In particular, I will talk about the importance for Cuba of the supplies of Soviet oil, the Soviet Union's purchases of Cuban sugar and, finally, this last magnanimous act of the Soviet government.

In the course of subsequent conversation at which President Dorticos was also present, Fidel Castro declared to me that on the whole the economic situation of the country continues to remain completely satisfactory, in spite of growing difficulties. We hope to cope with these difficulties and will take appropriate measures. It is necessary to note that after the establishment of a complete economic blockade by the Americans we expected that the country would have to endure domestic difficulties, the nature of which would be considerably more serious than turned out in reality. Our industry and agriculture, continued Fidel Castro, are operating and stepping up production rates successfully. We are confident that the problems of the country's supply of fats will be solved in 18 months as a result of measures taken by

the Cuban government to increase the number of cattle and especially pigs. The shortcomings which are now being felt in the population's supply of meat will be solved in about six months, that is by the end of the current year, by sharply increasing the number of poultry, mainly chickens.

In conclusion Fidel Castro again asked [me] to pass his cordial gratitude to the Soviet government for the aid, stressing that Cuba will be able to handle the economic difficulties created by the blockade considerably more easily, namely as a consequence of the enormous aid which the Soviet Union is giving.

President Dorticos, who was present at the conversation, endorsed to these statements of Fidel Castro, and for his part also asked that the Soviet government be conveyed the deep and warm gratitude for the aid to the Cuban people at a difficult moment.

In the conversation I informed Fidel Castro and Dorticos that a Soviet tanker oil arrived in Cuba today which delivered 8,000 tons of vegetable. They received this report with great satisfaction.

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