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Summary of a Conversation between Cde. A. M. Romyantsev, Editor-in-Chief of the journal 'Problemy Mira i Sotsializma', and Cde. Blas Roca, Member of the Secretariat of the National Leadership of the United Revolutionary Organizations

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Summary:

Blas Roca explains that the Cuban Missile Crisis "ought to be viewed as a defeat" for Cuba and the Soviet Union.

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Summary of a conversation between Cde. A. M. Romyantsev, Editor-in-Chief of the journal "Problemy Mira i Sotsializma" [Problems of Peace and Socialism] and Cde. Blas Roca, member of the Secretariat of the National Leadership of the United Revolutionary Organizations

The conversation was held at a government villa in Prague on 2 November 1962. Cdes. Kremnev and Semenov, officials of the journal's editorial board, were present.

Cde. Blas Roca warned that in this conversation he was expressing his purely personal opinion based on information of the European press. He has not had an opportunity to consult with members of the National Leadership and quickly left for Havana on Sunday after receiving a telegraphed call from the Cuban government.

In the opinion of Cde. Blas Roca the recent events connected with the Cuban problem ought to be viewed as a defeat.

Blas Roca thinks that that situation that has developed right now ought to be viewed soberly and objectively, based on the conviction of the superiority of the forces of the socialist camp over the camp of imperialism and from a faith in the final triumph of socialism.

If the Soviet ships had broken through the American blockade by force and then, after consultation with the Cuban government and with its participation, negotiations were begun about dismantling the Soviet missile bases in Cuba, then the current events could have been viewed as a victory. So long as diplomatic negotiations are being conducted after a bilateral exchange of telegrams between N. S. Khrushchev and Kennedy without consultation with Cuba beforehand, and the position of the Cuban government was ignored inasmuch as the Soviet missile bases in Cuba were dismantled at American gunpoint, events in the Caribbean Sea ought to be viewed as a temporary retreat.

Talks were held this year between the Soviet and Cuban governments, as a result of which the Soviet missile bases were built in Cuba. This was a victory of the socialist camp. The Cuban government realized that the construction of Soviet missile bases in Cuba could not pass unnoticed. Military specialists also warned about this. The Cuban government realized that Cuba would be wiped from the face of the Earth in the conditions of a thermonuclear war and moreover that there was not a single atomic bomb shelter in Cuba. However, the Cuban government agreed to place the Soviet missile bases since this strengthened the defense of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the defensive capabilities of the socialist camp and, accordingly, were a contribution to the cause of the defense of peace.

It was expected to make an open declaration of the existence of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba in November. The government of the United States was only two weeks ahead of this declaration. Thus, what happened cannot be considered a surprise. The question arises, did the Soviet missile bases in Cuba bring the world to the brink of war?

The guarantees of the government of the United States and by their allies not to attack Cuba remain purely oral. Before the attack of the mercenaries on Playa Giron Kennedy also gave a solemn promise not to invade Cuba. Stevenson, the US Representative to the UN, gave solemn assurances from the rostrum of the UN that Cuba had been bombed not by American, but by Cuban aircraft. All these assurances turned out to be false.

The American blockade of Cuba remains in force. American planes fly over Cuba. Therefore the dismantling of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba ought to be considered a retreat.

Of course, Cuba has weapons to repel a foreign invasion. Of course, the Soviet missile bases in Cuba were not a decisive factor in the defense of the socialist camp since the Soviet Union has intercontinental missiles.

However, current events in the Caribbean Sea cannot be viewed other than a temporary defeat.

When differences between the US and its allies are aggravated we view it as our success. The current events in the Caribbean Sea have caused differences between the Cuban and Soviet governments. These differences primarily concern the problem of the inspection of Cuban territory by UN forces. Fidel Castro has repeatedly

declared that Cuba will not agree to UN inspection since it does not want to become a second Congo. In giving unilateral consent to UN inspection in Cuba the Soviet government has put the Cuban government in a difficult position. The arrival of Cde. Mikoyan in Cuba will undoubtedly help remove any differences. The main trump card of the counterrevolutionaries in Cuba has always been anti-Sovietism. I personally, said Cde. Blas Roca, have experienced deep inner satisfaction that I have recently managed to achieve such a state that Fidel Castro felt absolute trust in the Soviet government and the CPSU, and personal admiration for N. S. Khrushchev. The recent events have dealt a definite blow to the feeling of trust in and love for the Soviet Union. I hope that the visit of Cde. Mikoyan will help overcome this.

The creation of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba facilitated a strengthening of the revolutionary process in Latin America. A revolution in Latin America would tie the hands of the United States and not allow it to rush into a world war. If this revolution has not developed at a faster pace then it is only because the Argentinian, Venezuelan, Brazilian, and Chilean comrades, in spite of the fact that a much more favorable situation for the victory of the revolution has developed in these countries than there was in Cuba in 1958, have continued to take defensive positions and fear going over to the offensive.

In the opinion of Blas Roca, the dismantling of the Soviet missile bases in Cuba and the offensive of the enemy will undoubtedly lead to an increase of defensive sentiments among our comrades in Latin America, who will refer to a need to defend legality, avoid violence, and lead to enlisting the national bourgeoisie in an alliance, as if this was a goal in itself, and not a means to win power. Thus, the current events in the Caribbean Sea will slow the development of the revolutionary process in Latin America and consequently weaken the fight for socialism and for peace in the entire world.

All this, in Blas Roca's opinion, provides grounds to view events in the Caribbean Sea as a temporary retreat.

Cde. Blas Roca stressed that he believes in the superiority of the forces of socialism over the forces of imperialism. But if a giant does not use his forces, but only talks about his superiority, then he risks suffering defeat at the hands of a dwarf who exerts all his forces and is active. Blas Roca expressed regret that Cuba does not have even a single torpedo boat to break through the American naval blockade by force.

Cde. Blas Roca said that he believes that the meaning of his life, as a Communist in the Party since 1929, has been to strengthen the friendship and unity between the Cuban and Soviet peoples. In all circumstances, during all turning points he has always stood on the side of the Soviet Union. Cde. Blas Roca gave assurances that he would continue to fight for the strengthening of this unity in the future and sees the meaning of his life in this.