

November 21, 1960

**Memorandum of Conversation between
Vice-Chairman Zhou Enlai, Party Secretary of the
Cuban Popular Socialist Party Manuel Luzardo, and
Member of National Directory Ernesto Che Guevara**

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Summary:

A diplomatic conversation covering China-Cuba relations, especially economic situations and the aid China is giving to Cuba.

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Translation - English

Memorandum of Conversation between Vice-Chairman Zhou Enlai, Party Secretary of the Cuban Popular Socialist Party Manuel Luzardo, and Member of National Directory Ernesto Che Guevara

(without review of Vice-Chairman Zhou Enlai)

Top Secret

Venue: Xihua Hall of Zhongnanhai

Time: 11:20-2:45 hours

Accompanied by: Li Xiannian, Wu Xiuquan

Interpreter: Cai Tongkuo

Recorder: Zhang Zai

Luzardo: Good health to the Premier.

Zhou: Thanks (introduced comrade Wu Xiuquan).

Luzardo: He joined our Congress of Representatives.

Zhou: Thank you for your treatment of him.

Luzardo: We were glad to treat him, only afraid of having not treated well.

Zhou: You were so busy.

Luzardo: It was our first time treating so many comrades from fraternal parties. Although we did want to treat them well, there many things that [we] didn't do well.

Zhou: [It's all right] as long as the meeting was good.

Luzardo: This [the meeting] is the major [thing].

Zhou: When did you leave Moscow?

Luzardo: Four days ago.

Zhou: Comrade [Blas] Roca [Calderio] is still in Havana. How is his health?

Luzardo: He's getting better. You know that not long ago he felt a bit uncomfortable.

Zhou: [I] know. He's been to China.

Luzardo: Twice. [His] health is now not bad.

Zhou: [Let's] begin with detailed issues and then move to discussion of the situation. Comrade Guevara is about to leave [Beijing] for other places. This afternoon there is a People's Congress. Detailed issues have been discussed with comrade Guevara, [but] today [let's] go through them again.

You [referring to Lu] are very concerned about this thing: the first thing we will discuss is about sugar. The price for sugar is four US cents per pound. We will agree to the price that the Soviet Union gave you. You know that we advocate following the

Soviet Union. The amount of sugar, i.e. one million tons, is no problem for us. The problem is whether you could buy our goods worth one million [tons of] sugar, because we could only barter with you, which was made clear to you that day. Comrade Li Xiannian told me that this morning [we] could give you a list of our goods [for bartering]. We have proposed a list of goods worth over one hundred million USD for your reference. If after selecting from this list, the value [of goods you picked] is still unable to square with the cost of sugar, i.e. 88 million USD, you will find more industrial products during Comrade Guevara and other comrades' visit to Shanghai, and complement the list by proposing more [items]. We don't know what sort of industrial products you need. Shanghai, in this regard, offers many options. The second thing is about aid. What you mentioned in Moscow is that within the period of the Five Year Plan, between 50 and 100 million USD is needed. The problem now is not the amount. The problem is about what projects you want, including technological materials and equipment installation, such as a paper-making factory and a textile factory. If you cannot come up [with a list of what you need], you could complement it when in Shanghai. Shanghai has more goods. Watching the industrial and transportation exhibition here alone is not enough. When items are fixed, [we] could be able to estimate a value, and then draft an agreement. As to other detailed issues, we will send people to Havana to estimate the scale and speed of construction in accordance with your raw resources and materials. In helping your construction, one principle is to enable factories to produce earlier [in order to] meet demands quickly. In line with this, developing medium and small scale projects is more beneficial. For example, doing a big [project] is less [wise] than dividing it and developing two smaller ones which are adjustable with regards to raw materials and labor, quick and dispersed. The third is technological aid. With regard to technological materials (including industry, transportation and the handicraft industry), technological staff and service men, if you need [them], we could help you, or send people [to Cuba], or you could send people to China to learn, either way will do. Categories and numbers [of them] are up to you to decide. Fourth, transportation, which we have studied. Whether it's shipping sugar [to China] or transporting goods [to Cuba], we charter ships and pay them in foreign currencies; as to freight, two sides calculate [and share]. Based on current situation, it's estimated that [we] will still be able to charter ships. Recently we shipped sugar back; in the future, [we] could have long-term chartering and [more] shuttles could be expected. Comrade Guevara said that Cuba has more than one harbor, and that only one place [for loading and unloading] is not enough, and loading and unloading could be done somewhere else. Fifth, producing some documents. Comrade Li Xiannian and Comrade Guevara could [try] publishing some communiqués or other documents. The delegation could study this with our side. Within the delegation, you (referring to Guevara) could also study with your deputy foreign minister.

Guevara: I want to talk about our opinion of your talk. We agree to each point you mentioned. But I must stress one thing: Cuba is now in an extremely difficult period. We need aid from socialist countries, but don't want ourselves to turn into your heavy burden. China is a big country that has a spirit of helping others. But [we] don't want to create difficulties for you because of [you] helping us. [We] don't want to let this sort of aid become [something] imposed by us upon you.

Zhou: It won't be an imposition, but of course, there are difficulties. That day I talked about the problem of disasters, but this is only a temporary phenomenon which could be solved within two years. As long as it is on our list, it means that we could supply you and it is for you to choose. In case that [the value of] selected agricultural and handicraft products is still yet to reach 88 million USD, you could select industrial products and go to Shanghai for selection. Normally, our industrial production can meet the schedule, while some projects can actually produce more than the planned [amount]. The fact that the light industry could not meet the plan is because of the reduction in raw materials. But the heavy industry has overfilled the quota. The reason why we did not, on our initiative, give our opinions when in Moscow is that we're not part of the European Eight Countries' Economic Cooperation Organization [COMECON]; we have no [experience regarding] multilateral payment agreements; we also don't have multilateral trade; our [economic] relationship with every socialist country has always been bilateral. Both of you know this point as Chairman Liu has

mentioned it.

Luzardo: He did mention it.

Guevara: About the problem of [purchasing] complete sets of equipment, I wish that our demands don't disturb your plan. It's all right for Cuba to wait for a while. Cuba's living standard is higher than China's. Although China has the ability [to provide equipment to us], we don't have the right to damage the Chinese people's life. The technical staff of our delegation are all representatives of the capitalist class, filled with capitalist thoughts. Please be patient when you are discussing with them.

Zhou: Our plan won't be disturbed in terms of the industry. Medium or small products, be it from light industry, heavy industry, or handicraft industry, [we] will produce based on raw materials that you have (instead of importing raw materials), which is beneficial for the development of one country's national economy, helpful to you, but of no [adverse] influence on us. We know that you gained independence not long ago, and [now] need technical experts whose performance we understand. Giving you technical materials is in accordance with socialist countries' practice, i.e. no patent rights and you only pay the cost of printing and paper. When [our] technical staff go to your place, [they] should receive the same treatment as your workers have, instead of excessive [treatment]. These are our rules. Their families at home will be looked after by us. They eat what your technical staff eat, and live where your technical staff live. [The treatment] should not be the same as our cultural delegation had who went to your place and received very good treatment. Were this practice to continue, you couldn't afford [it]. Regarding commodity prices, as long as there are prices [for the same commodities] in international markets, we follow international market prices; if there are none of these prices, the two sides should discuss and decide.

Guevara: About [purchasing] complete sets of equipment, one point has to be made clear: Cuba's situation differs from China's. Cuban workers' wages are very high, which is due to being close to the US and therefore influenced by the US and also because workers struggled against US factory owners for higher wages. We prefer factories that are big and produce multiple goods, which is different from China. I wish that at least one complete [replica] of a Chinese company could be taken and put into production within a relatively short period, as a model.

Zhou: What we supply is a complete solution. [We] will be responsible for technical materials, design, equipment, installation, and transportation.

Guevara: [I] want to be clearer about the problem of transportation. Does each side share half of foreign currency costs?

Zhou: It depends on your foreign reserves. If purchasing sugar, we pay the freight and price you received is FOB [Free On Board]; when it comes to the procurement of our goods, if freight has to be taken into account, [we] could discuss [the sharing percentage]. In one word, [we] will not create difficulties for you.

Guevara: Then my mission is completed.

Luzardo: I very much want to point out that his (referring to Guevara's) mission is the same as [my] mission.

Zhou: Have you seen the recent interfering activities of the US in the Caribbean Sea? [How is] the situation? [sic; the original is unclear. Furthermore, it's followed by an abrupt change of topic-trans.]

Luzardo: When I was about to come here, [I] just thought that it would be great if there could be a discussion between one party member and another party member.

Zhou: Correct.

Luzardo: The delegation is [in the name] of the Cuban government, which I didn't participate in. But I came to work this thing out with Comrade Guevara. Last time I told Chairman Liu: in front of the Chinese Communist Party, I could describe Comrade Guevara as a party member and also the member of our national directory, which I also said back in Moscow. This is off the record.

Zhou: We [also] keep it off record, which is why in the public speech I addressed Guevara as Your Excellency Major. (Everybody laughed.)

Luzardo: The approach we're adopting is the one of seeking close cooperation between us-Comrade Guevara and the Party Secretary (referring to Lu himself)-and you-comrades of the Chinese [Communist] Party. You also understand that many things could be done in this way, but couldn't be spoken of as such.

Zhou: Yes, this approach is good, also beneficial to obtain the solidarity of the Latin American people.

Luzardo: This is to say: this talk is a discussion between the delegation of the Cuban [Communist] Party and the representatives of the Chinese [Communist] Party. Comrade Roca came this summer, and [he] has already explained the nature and problems of the Cuban revolution. I don't want to discuss the details any more. I think you have understood.

Zhou: Yes, today the People's Daily publishes the article written by Comrade Guevara for the Verde Olivo magazine on 5 October.

Luzardo: Of course, we could take this opportunity to talk about other things. The Cuban revolution was deepened recently: US banks have now all been nationalized.

Zhou: [I] know [it].

Luzardo: The remaining banks that haven't been nationalized are only Canadian banks.

Zhou: Two [banks].

Luzardo: This is why Canada does not follow the US, and impose an embargo. We should exploit the conflict between them.

Zhou: We should exploit all conflicts that could be exploited.

Luzardo: The experience of the Chinese [Communist] Party is useful in this regard.

Zhou: Comrade Mao Zedong has told Comrade Guevara that in Shanghai we still have British banks.

Luzardo: US sugar factories and companies together worth over one billion USD have all been nationalized.

Now the US has only a Guantanamo Base in Cuba. On top of other work, land reform and cooperatives [are almost finished]. We could agree with what Fidel Castro said that the first period of revolution is completed.

Zhou: This is a democratic revolutionary period, [to be precise,] an anti-imperialist, nationalist democratic revolutionary period.

Luzardo: True, but we do not always say so. Just like what Fidel Castro said, our agenda is, as the Havana Declaration proposed, to constrain the phenomenon of one person exploiting another, which explains the way ahead for the development of revolution. Between you and me, [I] could speak of it: The Cuban regime is one based on the alliance between workers and peasants. We didn't publically say so. When we spoke to the public, [we] talked about four classes, which are classes of workers, peasants, small capitalists, and big capitalists. The major leadership goes to the workers' with citizens and radical small capitalists participating. Revolution is striding forward. I didn't expect it to be so quick; at that moment, I wanted to make the process of nationalization slower. But facing the aggression of US imperialism and resistance of the big capitalist class (although their power is weak), we were left with no other choice. Naturally, it's impossible not to provoke deep hostility from the US imperialists. Not only because what Cuba confiscated was US capital worth nearly one billion USD, it's also because the Cuban revolution made an example for all other Latin American countries, which [became more significant] given Cuba's proximity to the US, only 90 miles. This revolution is profound, constantly developing and deepening. Therefore, the US imperialists use all sorts of measures to defeat the Cuban revolution. You know that Cuba [had] an oil problem. Thanks to Soviet help, we thwarted the US attack on this front. The US has effectively stopped buying Cuban sugar, but the Soviet Union helped us, buying lots of sugar. Because of this, [we] also thwarted this attack. We're continuously thwarting all forms of aggression against us. Under this circumstance, the US is prepared to deal with us with military interference. Although they [the Americans] have many plans, the Latin American people support us, and people of the world, principally people of socialist countries, support us. Comrade [Nikita] Khrushchev issued a warning: whoever attacks Cuba, [the Soviet Union] will prepare to support us. Now the US implements an overall economic blockade of us, while [it] does not abandon the idea of military attack. It's training Cuban war criminals and mercenaries in Guatemala and other Central American countries, and preparing [them] to launch an attack upon Cuba when conditions become mature, which makes such attacks look as if [they are] not from the US.

Zhou: How many people are being trained overseas?

Luzardo: It's estimated that there are 5,000 persons. But it's really hard to calculate. Rich people all do not want to die.

The US capitalist class even uses Spanish Falangists and German Fascists to create all sorts of provocations. [It] relies on Guatemala in particular which has submitted to the US. The US also wants to put Guatemala and other Latin American countries in conflict with Cuba. [It] could then convene a meeting of the Organization of American States [OAS] and rule that Cuba is aggressive. As Guatemala is impotent in terms of combating aggression, in accordance with the verdict of the Organization of American States, it's up to the US to provide troops to wage a small-scale war in the Caribbean Sea; meanwhile, the US will maintain the economic blockade, throttling revolution economically as well as militarily. The war activities of the US in the Caribbean Sea are shamelessly open: [it] wants to occupy islands near the island of Cuba, for example, the Isle of Pines, create a puppet regime on these islands, like a small Taiwan, establish diplomatic relations with the puppet regime, give them weapons, and [send war] ships to besiege the island of Cuba. Thus, we can imagine the danger Cuba is facing. Now Cuba is developing its internal strength. The Cuban people are invincible, and they fully support the revolutionary government. The insurgent troops are the army of workers and peasants, becoming better day by day and having been

consolidated and developed day after day. It's a brand new army, being guerrillas in the past but now regular troops. He (referring to Guevara) is one of the men in charge. Nominally, he is the head of the National Bank [of Cuba]; he's, in fact, one of the men in charge of military troops. We have organized revolutionary militias, rank-and-file militias, with a total between 250 thousand and 300 thousand militias of workers, peasants, and students. They are militarily vigilant, being trained, and divided into regiments, battalions, and companies. Now there are schools specialized in training militias. Insurgents, militias, and people are all highly mobilized. They have good morale, ready to protect the revolution and the homeland. We have weapons, relatively good weapons; we are learning to use weapons. Our weakness is the absence of an air force. [We] are short of pilots. More efforts should be made in this regard. Popular organizations have been increasingly united: youth organizations have merged into one; women's organizations have merged into one.

Zhou: How many people does the youth organization have?

Luzardo: Over 100 thousand. This figure could hardly be described as accurate though. Because organizations have just merged, there are communists, people of the 26th of July Movement, and organizations of other natures. The leadership of this [youth] organization is good. Women's organizations have also merged. The trade union at first encountered these difficulties [caused by miscellaneous sources of members], but now has become better and more consolidated.

Zhou: How many workers?

Luzardo: If one takes into account agricultural workers who joined the trade union, there are over one million. Within the trade union, there are muhachi [sic] people (referring to traitors among workers [or workers helping factory owners]) and opportunists. Peasants' organizations have also merged. Now [we] are adopting a critical measure: merging the 26th of July Movement and the Party into a united political organization. This is a major activity. [We] don't want a rush for quick results; [we] will do so when conditions are mature.

Zhou: That's correct.

Luzardo: The important thing is that the 26th of July Movement is consistent with us in terms of strategy and aggression resistance. Both sides agree that the new organization should be founded on a Marxist-Leninist base. Its organizational principle should also be a Marxist-Leninist principle. Every element within us has all been actively mobilized. You know that the representative assembly of our party proposed four slogans: strengthen the unity of the nation, strengthen national defense and protect revolution, improve production, raise awareness.

Zhou: [Those are] very good.

Luzardo: These four slogans are anti-imperialist slogans. We know that the development of revolution has received support from people within the country, from people of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, from socialist countries, among which [support] from the Soviet Union and China have been the most important. We're confident to say that although we have difficulties, [such as] economic blockade, military provocation, being only 90 miles away from the US, the Cuban revolution will not fail, in the same way that the Soviet Union, China, and the entire socialist camp will not fail. Therefore, aid from socialist countries is particularly important, and the meeting today of our two parties is significant. Honestly speaking, helping the Cuban revolution develop is an investment in the global socialist movement; it's a political investment. We destroyed one link of the imperialist chain in Latin America, and hope that other links will break and fall too.

Zhou: [That's] right.

Luzardo: We're very grateful for the aid of China.

Zhou: [We] should do so. This is our responsibility.

Luzardo: We are also grateful for the [Chinese] efforts [to provide] aid in the future. Comrade Guevara understands your difficulties in construction. But as a comrade, [he] requested that you meet our wishes as fully as you can, to prevent Cuba's living standard from dropping. As Comrade Guevara said, this living standard has reached a certain degree. The aim of the Cuban revolution is not to reduce but to increase it. We need support from socialist countries, mainly [in the form of] buying sugar. [We] wish that socialist countries could buy 4 million tons, at no less than 4 [US] cents per pound. If China could buy 1 million tons, it would be of tremendous help. Comrade Zhou Enlai's suggestions could be considered, while our needs should also be pondered. Both sides should be taken into account. [We] wish that by exploiting this opportunity, [we] strengthen the fraternal contact between [our] two parties.

Zhou: [I] Agree.

Luzardo: [Confronting the fact of] the people of Cuba and the people of China establishing a relationship, imperialism and monopoly capital are not happy. They want to break down this relationship. But other Latin American countries, in the near future, will consider establishing relations with China. When Fidel Castro announced in the Havana meeting that [Cuba would] sever diplomatic relationship with Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] and establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, people were in a buoyant spirit.

Zhou: Thank you for your brave and just act.

Luzardo: I'm indebted to the Chinese people.

Zhou: Why?

Luzardo: Cuba established contact with Jiang Jieshi.

Zhou: That was so in the past. It's not your responsibility.

Luzardo: Driving away imperialism and tyranny opens up the door for establishing relations with [the People's Republic of] China.

Zhou: Correct.

Luzardo: The friendship between the people of two countries is growing day by day.

Zhou: Correct.

Luzardo: The friendship between two parties, too, is developing, on which Comrade Roca has been insisting. His proposal was correct and [we] should follow [it].

Zhou: Thanks for explaining these problems. Indeed, the Cuban people cracked a gap [in the wall] of the US backyard. The fact that [the Cuban people are] standing in the frontline of [the] anti-US [struggle] is what the Chinese people as well as people of the world admire the most. We believe that once there appears one gap, other gaps will follow. Once one link breaks off, there will be other links following. Once the Latin

American people wake up, [they] will sleep no more. While we pin down US military forces around Taiwan, you pin down even larger [US troops]. Therefore we have a duty to support you. You don't have to thank [us]. We have the duty to help. People of two countries stand together on the path of struggling and oppose the same enemy. Now our two countries have diplomatic relations and [our] two parties have a closer tie, which are all happy things. Latin American people respect you; the entire world, principally the people of socialist countries, respects you. These are all good aspects, favorable aspects. The US imperialists refuse to submit [to these developments]. It does what it can to intervene. We keep a close eye on the two approaches you mentioned. One is to provoke the conflict between you and Central American countries, and then let the Organization of American States make further efforts to intervene. Another is to operate a puppet regime on the Isle of Pines. Not only does Eisenhower once again attempt this, the newly elected President [John F.] Kennedy also speaks of waging a partial war. Around him, diplomatic experts, papers, and other mass mediums are all selling [the idea of] limited warfare, forest [or "brush"] fire warfare. The New York Times recently published five articles; they advocate that limiting the war to a region, in which case the Soviet Union will be unable to use missiles. This is a very important point. Because using missiles means [starting] a world war, which is identical to what Khrushchev lays out in the five points. First, the two countries [the US and the Soviet Union] both reduce military expenditure; second, [the two countries] do not allow nuclear weapons to destroy the two countries' civilizations; [the two countries] do not let the atmospheres above the two countries [become] polluted [with radioactive fallout]; fourth, both agree not to put nuclear weapons in the hands of more countries, which [specifically] include China and France, and what's worth attention is that West Germany and Japan are not mentioned; fifth, the two countries could promote the exchange of culture, science, and trade. In the past trade [as a term] was not raised, but he [this time] adds trade. Khrushchev said that missiles are symbolic, and [the Soviet Union] does not want war. Kennedy captures this sentence; he [chooses] not to wage a big war, or a missile war, instead, he plots a partial war and non-nuclear war. In the way you said, Guatemala and Nicaragua [first] create provocations, and the US then steps out, intervening and reconciling. Or [the US] founds a puppet regime on the Island of Pines, the possibility of which should be looked into. In other words, the US imperialists won't stand on the frontline. Cuban comrades should study this situation. [If] the US stays in the dark in the shadows, how should the Soviet Union respond? How should China respond? How should socialist countries and Latin American people respond? You are close to the US, and it's easy for the US to exploit certain Latin American countries and operate puppet regimes. [When] the US uses Latin American countries to fight Latin American countries, [they] could say that Europeans and Asians should mind their own business. [You] need to think of your response if this situation emerged. Has Premier Castro considered it yet? Has the Popular Socialist Party considered it yet?

Luzardo: These are precisely problems we are thinking of. Fidel Castro recently said that the first priority should be given to strengthening the internal power. [We should] make ourselves capable of repulsing any attack, and therefore make it unnecessary for the Soviet Union to aid [us] with missiles. Because just as what Comrade Zhou Enlai said, that would start a world war and entail huge sacrifice. No fantasy should be given to the Soviet missiles. Because the foundation of protecting Cuba should [not] be placed on a world war. Therefore, [we] should consolidate internally as much as you can and seek aid from other countries. The fact that you tell me about Kennedy's words makes me very happy. I only knew the basic content, while what you said is detailed. In his campaign Kennedy indicates that he is an implacable foe of the Cuban revolution.

Zhou: Very correct.

Luzardo: Kennedy stresses only one aspect of Khrushchev's speech.

Zhou: Of course, he is an imperialist.

Luzardo: Khrushchev said that the aid of missiles is symbolic, but the US attacks are not symbolic. Kennedy only wants one side of Khrushchev's speech, we want both sides. You have the duty to continue exposing imperialism, seeking the support of Latin American people. It's difficult for the US to obtain agreement [among Latin American countries]. You are versed in these problems. Your analysis must be more incisive.

Zhou: You are more familiar with Latin American problems.

Luzardo: You know the UN voting results of the proposal concerning Cuba. Some Latin American countries abstained, including Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador, Panama, [and the] Dominican Republic]. It's not entirely a walk in the park [yifanfengshun] for the US to realize its goal within the Organization of American States. We will carefully study the problems raised by Comrade Zhou Enlai. As we have discussed above, we should, as much as we can, expose the US and exploit the conflict between the US and Latin American countries.

Zhou: Correct.

Luzardo: Doing so is good for thwarting US plans.

Zhou: Does Comrade Guevara have his own opinion? You are a strategist.

Luzardo: And also a statesman.

Guevara: As Comrade Lu has explained, Cuba's situation is unique. The US does not know in practice what to do and how to attack. Waging a large-scale [war] will provoke a world war. We have two duties: one is to protect the lives of Cuban people, and another is to defend world peace.

Zhou: Correct.

Guevara: We know the degree of danger.

Zhou: This is the [present] situation. As you two have said, [you] should expose the US, exploit conflicts, mobilize nationals, seek [external] aid. All these are correct. As [a communist] comrade, with experience in lasting warfare, [I] provide one point for your reference: based on our party's experience, one should prepare for the bad scenario while striving for the good one. The direction of our efforts should be to strive for the best, but [we] should [also] prepare [for] the worst. Assuming that we have those preparations done, it will be difficult for the US to intervene. This is good. We'll strive [for the best] and try to push for [it]. But in case two conspiracies were to be realized, what [should we] do then? [We] have to prepare in advance. Assuming that the blockade starts off, ships of the Soviet Union and other countries could not reach Cuba, the US declares regional war, Cuba is then bound to stand up and resist and Castro will lead, which we firmly believe. But [we] need time: to defeat the US in the war, to push for changes in Latin America, and to push people of the world [to respond to] the US military intervention, all need time and preparation. Perhaps you are already prepared.

Guevara: What preparation are you referring to?

Zhou: Could weapons, manpower, militias be expanded? Weapons need to be added and stored. You should yourself build weapons-making and repairing factories. In

particular, there should be preparations for explosives, food, [and also] solid food and gasoline that could be stored over a long period of time. [With them] one could still resist with supplies when external aid is cut off. [We] don't know if you are prepared.

Guevara: We agree to strive for the best, but [should] prepare for any possible situation. We've made achievements internally in developing [our] economy, cooperatives, and increasing production.

Zhou: I know.

Luzardo: We are overcoming difficulties, promoting cooperatives, and accelerating plans in this regard. As you said, [we] must think of what people will eat once that kind of situation [occurs]. Enemies will not rest, nor should we rest. [We] believe that Fidel Castro will fight to the end. He is a genuine revolutionary, firm, competent, and wise. His position is becoming closer to ours every day. Sometimes we can't even distinguish who is who. As to the problem of weapons, his (referring to Guevara's) will be more correct.

Guevara: Preparation is being made in every aspect. First, preparing for the enemy's raid. [The US plans] to finish us within two days, before Soviet aid arrives. The enemy could send paratroopers to Havana. They are familiar with Havana. Although Havana is not yet fully prepared, it's under preparation. Without relying on reinforcement from others, when paratroopers land, [we] could vanquish them immediately. We have made preparation for long-term resistance both in mountainous and urban areas. As the Premier said, we are storing weapons and explosives, building hospitals, transportation lines, telephone [facilities], modern war forts, training peasants who will wage guerrilla warfare. We have learned a lot from the Korean War. Some preparation work is not going fast, but it's heading in this direction. Could you send experts to our mountainous areas to establish explosive factories?

Zhou: We could. How about raw materials?

Guevara: [We] have glycerin and sulfur, concluded a contract with Czechoslovakia buying a cartridge-making factory which has a big effect, [products] of which could be used for multiple purposes, bombing attacking targets, conglomerated units, beachheads, and targets in the way of advancing. [We] should prepare for the absence of foreign aid, and for a lasting [war].

Luzardo: This is how it is.

Zhou: [You] should think [these issues] over. We have fought against the US in Korea. When you visit Korea, you could even talk to them, to see what secret defensive works could be constructed in mountainous areas. It's these defensive works that the Chinese Volunteer Army and Korean People's Army relied on. The US spent several ten thousand tons of explosives, [only to find] that they couldn't take even one mountain top. With these defensive works, he [the US] was on the hilltop, while we were within the hill. They couldn't capture [our positions] in any way. Because of this, the US imperialists are unhappy with the Koreans and the Chinese the most. Now it's the Cubans whom the US becomes unhappy with.

Luzardo: We have expanded your force [of communism].

Zhou: Everything should be considered on a long-term basis. It's better for the war not to come. In case it comes, peasants are capable of bearing suffering. [You] should educate workers, employees, and intellectuals in advance, your article (referred to Guevara's article) mentioned this point. [You] are striving for their life becoming

better; but in case it turns bitter, [you are striving] for national independence, [for the sake of which they] must also bear [hardships]. Fidel, Raúl [Castro], and Comrade Guevara are all strong persons. [You] should turn your strong will into the one of all Cuban people. This problem has been discussed by Comrade [Deng] Xiaoping and Comrade Roca. Chairman has also discussed with him for one day.

(The Premier invited Comrade Lu and Comrade Guevara for lunch, during which [they] also had the following conversation.)

Zhou: [You] should visit several communes outside Beijing and compare them.

Guevara: [We] have a somewhat different situation. We can't have large-scale collective employment. Our salaries are high. But the combination of agriculture and industry could be learned.

Zhou: How high are the salaries?

Guevara: 120 US dollars per month.

Zhou: Do peasants have a low living standard?

Guevara: Peasants' lives are improving gradually. Peasant workers earn 2.65 US dollars per day with 25 days a month.

Luzardo: [They] don't have work all year around. If [we] count by year, [peasants'] salaries are low.

Zhou: What is the unemployment?

Guevara: 300 thousand, and [another] 300 thousand seasonal unemployed people. The complete estimate is approximately over 500 thousand. This is not an accurate figure.

Zhou: Does it include urban and rural unemployed people?

Guevara: All are included. After the revolution 100 thousand people have found jobs.

Zhou: Has land in rural areas all been [re-]distributed?

Guevara: No. [People] with over 30 caballeria [ka] should hand out extra land. People with less 30 caballeria don't have to. But there are people who colluded with US reactionaries. We then gave them [a quota of] 20 caballeria or even less.

Zhou: Don't owners of land as such still need to hire agricultural workers?

Guevara: Yes.

Zhou: Are there restrictions?

Guevara: No.

Zhou: Do landlords have machines?

Guevara: They do.

Zhou: How many of the 4 million hectares of arable land you mentioned in our last conversation (referring to the meeting with Guevara on the 18th [of November]) could be distributed among peasants?

Guevara: Half [of the 4 million hectares].

Zhou: Peasants will be relieved once [they] are given land certificates.

Guevara: We are promoting [the idea of] joining cooperatives, in which case land becomes useless.

Zhou: According to China's experience, [you] should also not take back land certificates.

Guevara: Compared to Chinese peasants, Cuban peasants have a different perception towards land. Cuban peasants, for the time being, are not in a hurry to have their own land. They're willing to hand them over.

Zhou: What's the political attitude of landlords?

Guevara: [People] with more land hold a bad attitude. [People] with some 30 caballeria are relatively better.

Zhou: When you were fighting guerrilla warfare, did landlords and the urban capitalist class help you or empathize with you?

Guevara: If they had, they would have made a mistake.

Zhou: Why? Was the help not good?

Guevara: [Consider that they] help us and [later] we take away their lands.

Zhou: Have you given them jobs and political treatment?

Guevara: We let them do the [old] jobs, but with lower salaries.

Zhou: Have they been given political treatment?

Luzardo: They will be given [political treatment] if [they] don't oppose the revolution.

Zhou: Do [they] have voting rights?

Guevara: [They] have, but whom could they vote for?

Zhou: China's experience: a few capitalists, who supported or sympathized with us, have [not only been given] voting rights, we also select them at different levels of government as representatives, although very few [of them get selected]. Do you have a congress?

Guevara: No, [we] mainly [have a] people's congress. [We] don't have time for elections.

Zhou: Yes, it's [now] an era of revolution. Other than the small capitalist class, are there also private companies?

Luzardo: [We] have small ones.

Zhou: Do [you] have medium-size ones for the time being?

Luzardo: We have [companies] of several dozen people.

Guevara: Certain small factories, while not having big investments, have over one hundred [employees], such as sewing factories.

Zhou: Are these people supporting the revolutionary government?

Guevara: [They] are [behaving] better than before.

Zhou: Your wholesale business is in the charge of the government. Do you leave the retail business to small businessmen?

Guevara: It's the case in cities. In villages, most of the retail business is also in the hands of the government.

Zhou: Via state-run stores?

Guevara: They're called People's Stores.

Zhou: Is it because most commodities are imported [that] the government places tight control [over them]?

Guevara: Domestic commodities are also all purchased by the government and sold.

Zhou: Their raw materials are up to themselves to buy or for the government to distribute?

Guevara: [As to] domestic [raw materials], [they] buy themselves; [as to] foreign [raw materials], [they] buy via the government.

Zhou: You've managed foreign trade well. Our first thing after the revolution was to manage foreign trade, by doing these [we] cut off the connection with imperialism. Do you have enough intellectuals?

Guevara: Not enough. Their thoughts are backward. Every day there are people among them going to the US.

Zhou: Are there many among college students receiving US education?

Guevara: The class background of college student is not good. Most are the offspring of the rich people.

Zhou: Our [college students] weren't good either in the early period after liberation [of 1949]. They changed later.

Guevara: Like in Berlin of East Germany, we have people here every day running for

foreign countries.

Zhou: Do [you] have enough military academies?

Guevara: Trainers were old, very bad. Recently a group of militia officers graduated.

Zhou: What's the [attitude] of old intellectuals towards you?

Guevara: [They are] very annoying.

Luzardo: This kind of people could only write stuff that imperialism likes. They wrote about Cuban history only in the hope to create a counterfeit Cuban history. The geography books they wrote are correct though.

Guevara: Our director of the Land Reform Committee has written a book about the geography of Cuba. These people became unhappy. They burned his book. They consider the land reform as a considerable sin.

Luzardo: Thank you very much for your opinions and questions you raised today.

Zhou: For your reference.

Luzardo: China's revolutionary experience is worth learning.

Zhou: We share similarities. But each country has its own features. Foreign countries' experience could only be seen as a reference. [You] must [act] according to the detailed situation.

Luzardo: This [learning from others] is the only way to find the correct explanation.

Guevara: The book written by [Israel] Epstein [covering the period] from the Opium War to China's liberation, recounts the thirty year period of the Chinese Communist Party. [He] spoke of the necessary integration with peasants and [the idea of] armed revolution against armed counterrevolution, which fits entirely, that is, word by word, the situation of Cuba.