

June 3, 1961

**Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador
to Cuba Sergey Kudryavtsev and Che Guevara**

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Summary:

A record of a conversation between Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Sergey Kudryavtsev and Che Guevara, recorded in Kudryavtsev's diary. They discuss the internal and economic situations in Cuba, as well as U.S.-Cuban relations.

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RECORD OF CONVERSATION
with Minister of Industry of the Republic of Cuba
Ernesto Guevara
3 June 1961

During the conversation, Guevara, touching upon the internal situation in Cuba, noted that the situation in the country was in general good. Elections to the organs of state apparatus both in the center and in the provinces were proceeding successfully. Last week he, Guevara, completed his tour of the province Oriente, with which he was very satisfied. In the province Oriente, he inspected the state of industrial objects, and first of all the progress of work on opening the nickel plant in Moa, and also the functioning of the nickel plant in Nicaro, where Soviet specialists were employed.

In this connection, Guevara expressed great satisfaction with the Soviet-Cuban agreement signed in June on providing technical assistance in organizing the Cuba nickel industry, and he asked me to pass his gratitude, as well as the gratitude of the entire Cuban leadership to the Soviet government for providing help in this area, which is important to Cuba.

Speaking about the internal political situation, Guevara emphasized that after the defeat of the counterrevolutionary landing force, the revolution in general grew even stronger, and started moving ahead with more confidence. Touching upon the possibility of revitalization of the internal counterrevolution's activity, Guevara said that in his opinion, the counterrevolutionaries would need at least two to three months to recover from the strikes against them implemented by the organs of Cuban counterintelligence. Only after that the counterrevolution would be capable to renew its fight against the revolutionary government. It is likely that the U.S., continued Guevara, will keep sending their agents to Cuba during these months in order to create new terrorist and sabotage groups, which has been proven in no unclear terms by the recent statement of former Cuban Minister of Public Works [Manolo] Ray, who as it is known is the main organizer and leader of the terrorist and sabotage activities against the Cuban state. Ray recently left the so-called "[Cuban] Revolutionary Council" of Miro Cardona. This shows, noted Guevara, that the external counterrevolution would remain split, and that the contradictions within individual groups would grow deeper.

In the course of further conversation, Guevara stated that in his opinion, it was unlikely that the internal counterrevolution would succeed in organizing some activities in the country that would present any serious threat to the internal situation. The organs of Cuban counterintelligence, said Guevara, would deal with the counterrevolutionaries decisively, and would not allow them to raise their heads again, as it happened before the invasion.

Touching upon Fidel Castro's plan to exchange the captured participants of the intervention for tractors, Guevara said that apparently it would not work. The US would drag this process out and would not agree to pay compensation because it is not in their interest politically. He got such an impression from his conversations with the commission of prisoners of war, who participated in the intervention, who recently returned from the US, and who conducted negotiations with the American authorities and with the [Eleanor] Roosevelt [Tractors for Freedom] committee.

In the course of further conversation we spoke about the economic situation of the country. In this connection, Guevara expressed the following considerations. The economic situation remains in general satisfactory, although, of course, our difficulties are growing as well. These difficulties, however, turned out to be much smaller than the government expected in the beginning of May. The assistance from the Soviet Union and a number of countries of the socialist camp played a big role in removing those difficulties. However, the issue of supplying the country with fat-containing food products still remains problem number one.

Speaking about the international situation developing around Cuba, Guevara said that the United States now has to face the growing resistance on the part of Latin American countries in realization of the Kennedy plans of Cuba's isolation. The mission of acting Cuban Minister of Foreign Affairs [Carlos] Olivares to the countries of Latin America was successful overall and helped strengthen Cuban positions in such important countries as Brazil, Mexico, and Ecuador.

Of course, noted Guevara, Communist parties of many Latin American countries could do much more in defense of Cuba, but unfortunately the majority of them acts extremely indecisively. Presently, the United States, according to their information, said Guevara, proceed with hostile actions around Cuba, trying to encourage the countries of Latin America to participate in collective sanctions, which should be approved by the Organization of American States [OAS]. We do not exclude a possibility that the recent assassination of [Dominican Republic President Rafael] Trujillo would most likely be used in the United States to create a certain precedent for future interference in the Cuban affairs. At this moment, the United States apparently will try to get an OAS agreement to introduce order in the Dominican Republic. They need it in order to be able to persuade the OAS to interfere in the Cuban affairs. It is very difficult to directly accuse Cuba of the involvement in the assassination of Trujillo, although some Americans make statements to this effect. However, nobody believes such statements, and the United States probably will have to leave them behind soon. The Kennedy government in all likelihood will use the crisis in the Dominican Republic in order to create a certain precedent of interference in the internal affairs of that country with the approval and sanction of the OAS, so that they could use this precedent also against Cuba at a later stage.

The rest of the conversation dealt with general issues.

USSR Ambassador to the Republic of Cuba

[Signature]
Kudryavtsev