

August 16, 1963

Cable from Dutch Embassy, Havana (Reinink), 16 August 1963

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Summary:

Reinink writes to Amsterdam on the current situation in Havana. There is positive press about the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, it's more a case of lip service to the Soviet Union than genuine enthusiasm from the Cuban Socialist Party. The "new communists" especially have strong reservations about the treaty, and have cast aspersions on Nikita Khrushchev for reaching an agreement with Washington. More than half of the party leadership share this opinion, according to Reinink. Cuba's leadership is now more falling in line with China and Mao Zedong than with the Soviet Union.

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BY COURIER

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Despite the positive press in Cuba about the Moscow test ban treaty one gets the impression that this is more a case of "lip-service" and that the enthusiasm of the party leadership is less great than public commentaries would lead one to believe. From a conversation I had with a high-level official of the Ministry of Foreign Relations one could infer that especially the "new communists" have strong reservations about the agreement. According to informant, who himself belongs to the group of the neo-communists, Havana intends to accede, although not soon. The "new communists" in the party leadership, among whom are Fidel and Raul Castro as well as Ernesto Guevara, apparently do not much like the idea of an agreement of which one of the most important authors, Washington, is obstinately resisting a modus vivendi with Cuba. According to informant sixty percent of the party leadership shared this opinion. The "new comrades" have criticized Khrushchev at party leadership meetings, openly displayed their agreement with the position of Mao [Zedong] and even ventured to praise the forcefully negative attitude of [French President Charles] de Gaulle against the agreement, even if they did so half in jest. The pro-Chinese disposition of many "new communists" and the fear of Soviet-American agreements around Cuba analogous to the arrangement between Moscow and Washington that brought a solution to the October-crisis of 1962 seem to be the basis of said critical attitude. Nevertheless, taking into account the economic dependency which marks Cuba's relationship with Moscow, it is doubtful whether Havana will in the long term be able to withstand Soviet Russian pressure to accede to the agreement. Furthermore it does not seem unlikely that Havana, apart from certain ideological and political objections, will gladly let Moscow entreat it in the hope of making a positive reaction conditional upon further economic and/or political concessions.

Reinink 47.