

October 29, 1960

Information on the VIII Congress of National Socialist Party of Cuba

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Summary:

In a secret supplement to information from the VIII Congress of the People's Socialist Party, Bulgarian delegates Abramov and Tellalov summarize answers that Blas Roca, the Cuban delegation head, provided the congress. Roca claimed that socialism is the end goal of the revolution, but it is not publicly discussed. He explained the Communist party's involvement in the revolution and July 26th Movement. Abramov and Tellalov also describe the reestablishment of relations and disagreements between Cuba and Yugoslavia, including discussions about weapons. Fidel Castro met with socialist country representatives and described Cuba's plans to nationalize enterprises, particularly American. During the congress Castro described the evolution of the July 26th Movement and the consolidation of Communism in Cuba. Abramov and Tellalov endorse Castro's leadership and review the Cuban military's strengths and weaknesses. There is a brief mention Sino-Soviet relations.

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Top secret!

FOR POLITBURO OF CC OF BCP
SUPPLEMENT

To the information about the VIII congress of the People's Socialist Party (PSP) of Cuba

During the congress Politburo of the CC of PSP received the delegates of the parties from the socialist countries. The occasion for this meeting was presented by our delegation, which posed a number of questions in written form to Comrade Blas Roca.[1]

In answer to our questions, Comrade Blas Roca told us that Fidel Castro was fully aware that the prospect of the Cuban revolution was socialism. However, they do not speak in public about this. The party had contacts with Fidel Castro before the landing was made. During all the time of the guerrilla struggle, members of the party have worked in the Castro headquarters and in other high-ranking posts. The attitude of Fidel Castro to the party constantly evolves and improves. The party criticized itself that it mobilized late in order to assist the movement of Fidel Castro. Practically, it was only at that congress that a fully positive assessment was given to the attack of the barracks. Initially Castro had certain doubts in the sincerity of the party. Those suspicions were used by the enemies of the revolution who exerted pressure on Castro and wanted to turn the "July 26th" movement into an anticommunist one. The party showed Fidel Castro that it has no intention to oust him and now he is convinced that without the support of the party the revolution cannot develop. Now Fidel Castro thinks that steps should be taken for creating a united party in Cuba but it is premature to proceed to practical implementation of this task. Such is the position of the People's Socialist party, as well.

All big measures of the government should be coordinated in advance with the leadership of the party. This refers to the agrarian reform, the nationalization, and the position of the government at the conference in San Jose and others. There are communists in the government as well. But nobody speaks about this.

The relations with Yugoslavia developed in a very interesting way. For tactical considerations, diplomatic relations were restored first with Yugoslavia. After its arrival in Cuba, the mission of Yugoslavia displayed intense activity, and made a big fuss. They acted as the most loyal and good friends of the Cuban revolution. However, when they openly and directly posed to them the question of selling weapons to Cuba, the Yugoslavs practically refused on the grounds that they were conducting important negotiations with the Americans and, in order not to get into trouble, they could give them weapons only in principle. In answer to this the Cubans declared: We saw what friends of the Cuban revolution you are. Ernesto Guevara was on a visit in Yugoslavia. After his return he reported that no socialism was being built in Yugoslavia. It looks like that this opinion is shared by other leaders of the government. Through its party body the party conducted a big campaign against Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs protested sharply before Castro and then before the Central Committee. Both answered them that the press was free to write whatever it wanted. However, the Central Committee made an assessment. They admitted that the comparison with Franco was wrong and gave orders for Yugoslavia not to be attacked so severely.

Fidel Castro received the delegates of the socialist countries together with the delegates of the French and the Italian Communist parties. The conversation with him continued the whole night - from 11 pm till 6 am.

The meeting with Fidel Castro made a great impression on us. The conversation was

very sincere. He spoke and reasoned like a Marxist, like a man who appreciates very highly the Soviet assistance. He felt extremely grateful to the Soviet Union for this assistance. He explained to us the tactics of the Cuban government - to secure against every strike of the North-American imperialist the delivery of a methodical counterstrike. The question is not that we nationalize enterprises for 80, 100 and more million dollars, he said, but that a small country dares to reply with a counter-strike, to every strike of the "Northern Colossus." Namely because of this they have not nationalized at once all American enterprises, as well as big enterprises of Cuban capitalists. He said that in relation to this they should have a great deal of reserves about counter-strikes.

Focusing on the issue about the guerrilla movement, Fidel Castro told us that according to him, if the communists had started that movement, neither the Americans nor Batista would have let it exist and grow. At one time, he said, "there were only 12 of us left - one half under my command and the other half under the command of my brother Raul." Both Batista and the Americans thought that it referred to a few intellectuals, idealists and utopians who will grow desperate quickly and will give up the struggle. Later, when they [became aware of its extent], it was late - the movement had grown and consolidated.

Castro is well acquainted with problems of agriculture and speaks very competently about them.

Our impression is that the Cuban revolution is in strong hands and that there is no danger of what happened in Iraq.[2]

The party renders full support to the government and does its best not to allow any misunderstandings. The same is the attitude to the functionaries of the "July 26th" movement with whom it strives to establish closer and friendlier relations. The party maintains a low profile - there are no red banners at rallies and meetings and representatives of the party do not deliver speeches. Everything is conducted under the sign of national unity and Fidel Castro is promoted as a leader of the country and the people.

Only the Politburo had been informed about the meeting in Bucharest.[3] Everywhere in the country the Chinese delegation was received very warmly. At the ceremony on the occasion of the closing of the congress it was suggested that a Chinese delegate deliver a speech on behalf of all socialist countries. After objections by the representatives of the other socialist countries, the Politburo acceded to our suggestion, to have the GDR representative speak on our behalf and the Chinese delegate spoke only as a representative of China.

As it was already noted, now the army in Cuba is a completely new. The main body consists of former guerrillas. This constitutes both the strength and the weakness of this army. These are completely loyal and well-trained soldiers. However, a significant number of them, who come from villages, have the wrong attitude towards military discipline. A great majority of them, commanders of lower or higher rank, are not willing to study military science and display big complacency.

Together with consolidating the army, the party and the government keep to a course of quick expansion and consolidation of the working class and rural militia, which, at the suggestion of the party, is joined by communists, workers and peasants. The militia - these are the armed squads of the people. (Police exists separately.) They add up to the army. The party and the government rely very much on the militia, not only in the struggle against the enemies, the counter-revolution and the intervention forces, but also in the consolidation and the strengthening of the army and in training future commanders who can serve as an example to the military commanders.

29.10.1960. [29 October 1960]

SOFIA □

R. Avramov

K. Tellalov[4]

[1] Francisco Calderio (Blas Roka) - General Secretary of Cuban Communist Party, renamed in 1944 to Partido Socialista Popular (1934-1962).

[2] After Iraqi nationalist revolution on 14 July 1958 there was armed split among the new military junta and an attempt on life of its leader Gen. Abdul Karim Kassem in March 1959.

[3] During the congress of Romanian Workers Party in Bucharest there was carried out an international Communist discussion on 23-24 June 1960 regarding the Sino-Soviet political split.

[4] Ruben Avramov - a CC BCP member and head of a CC BCP deptment; Konstantin Tellalov - Deputy head of "Foreign Policy and International Relations" CC BCP department.