

January 26, 1967

Letter from Bulgarian Embassy, Havana

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Summary:

Petar Marinkov, Third secretar at the Bulgarian Embassy to Cuba, informs the Bulgarian ambassador about meetings with Cuban officials on youth communist leagues. Marinkov's reviews negotiations centered on Cuba's non-participation in established youth leagues and festivals. Cuban youth leaders hope to host youth festivals and incorporate military training for armed liberation movements into youth festival activities.

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Contents:

Translation - English

Secret!

To the ambassador of PRB in Cuba

COMRADE ATANAS KULBOV

MEMORANDUM

From Petar Marinkov, Third secretary at the Embassy of PR Bulgaria in Cuba.

Comrade Ambassador,

Last week, at my request, I met twice comrade Lazaro Mora, Secretary for the international relations of the National Committee of the Union of the Young Communists. At the first meeting we talked on topics connected with the conducting the Ninth World Youth Festival, and at the second - about the implementation of the treaty between our two youth organizations.

I requested the first meeting, so that he could explain to me in more detail the formulation of Jaime Crombet in his report at the Third Plenum of the National Leadership of the Union of the Young Communists about Cuba's not taking part in the meeting of the Organization Committee of the festival, called for at the end of this month in Vienna, and [to remind him] that the issue about the participation of Cuba in the festival should be discussed. In relation to this the counselor at the Polish embassy in Havana, comrade Curus, has informed our counselor, comrade Cohen, that the editor of the Polish youth newspaper, who was in Cuba on the occasion of the 8th anniversary of the revolution, has accidentally attended the first meeting of the plenum, and during the closed-door meeting a resolution was adopted by voting to the effect that Cuba should not participate in the festival and [should] possibly organize a counter-festival.

I also visited the man in charge for the work with the Soviet Comsomol in Cuba, comrade Shlyapnikov, who was accompanying the Soviet youth delegation led by the Secretary of the Soviet Comsomol CC Torsuev that also took part in the work of the plenum. He said that outside the official treatment of this issue in the report of Crombet, he did not know anything about the closed-door meeting of the plenum, but he knew the position of Cuba about the festival, which was discussed with the Soviet youth delegation after its implementation.

During my meeting with comrade Mora I told him that I could not attend the first meeting of the plenum, where the issue about the festival was posed. I asked him to explain to me what exactly was their position and whether there was a change in it after the visit of our youth delegation led by comrade Georgi Atanassov in October last year. He answered that that issue was indeed posed at the plenum but a resolution was adopted not to participate in the organization committee. And the issue about the participation in the festival was to be resolved by the CC of the Party. He informed me that such a decision was already adopted. Its sense was that in case that a resolution was adopted the festival to be conducted in Europe, in Sofia, Cuba would not take part in it.

Elucidating the reasons which had provoked those Cuban resolutions on that issue, comrade Mora told me that the meeting of the organization committee would be only a facade and even a farce, because an already adopted resolution where the festival will be held would be sanctioned at it. Long ago WFDY [World Federation of Democratic Youth] stopped to be an independent international organization and the powerful countries, the ones that give the money, dictate its course, and [in this case] it is the USSR. Everything up to now shows that the USSR and the other socialist countries are against hosting the festival in Cuba and for the last time they got convinced in this during the recently concluded visit of the delegation of the Soviet Comsomol led by comrade Torsuev. In brackets I would like to note that at its

departure no representative of the National leadership of the Union of the young communists was sent and only at noon did comrade Mora apologize on the phone that he could not go to the airport because he overslept.

Further comrade Mora told me that they would send a letter to the organization committee, in which they would state their position. He added that one of the reasons not to participate in this meeting is that they did not want to enter into bitter discussions with the delegations because by no means would they like to spoil their relations with some youth unions. He told me that Cuba wanted to conduct a festival of the young revolutionaries, who immediately after it would be ready to take to arms and to go to fight where the conditions require it. Once again they suggested the festival to be conducted in Vietnam and if this could not be carried out, that the only other place, where the festival should be conducted, given the current situation, was Cuba. And also, that this is the personal wish of Fidel Castro who is the only Prime Minister who made a public statement for Cuba to be the host of the festival.

I wanted to know whether the Cubans had some other intentions about the festival but Mora refused to say more about this issue and underlined that what was said up to now was their position. Obviously, however, they have not given up their attempts to act in this direction and this is the only explanation about the fact that a resolution was adopted for Jaime Crombet to go to Sofia in order to participate in the meeting of the persons in charge of the Cuban scholarship-supported students in the socialist countries, in which the Minister of Education would take part and also one of the closest men to Fidel Castro - Jose Llanusa, who only a few months ago delivered a long speech at the plenum of the Cuban students who study in the socialist countries. Hardly during this short period had such big changes happened in the life of those students to require the trip of the Minister of Education and first secretary of the National Committee of the Union of the Young Communists. In his conversation with comrade Georgi Atanassov he announced that he would visit Bulgaria at the time of the congress of our Comsomol. There are reasons to suggest that at this meeting they will elucidate the Cuban position about the festival and WFDY in general and they will give instructions for exploring the opinion about this issue of the Latin American, the Asian, and the African students who study in the socialist countries with a view to provoke disagreement with the resolution of the organizing committee for the carrying out of the festival and to support the position of Cuba.

At my second meeting with comrade Mora we revised the fulfillment of the agreement between DCYU and the Union of the Young Communists. For more lucidity I am going to present his opinion about the fulfillment of the separate clauses in the agreement.

[...]

THIRD LEGATION SECRETARY:

/P. Marinkov[1]/

Havana

26 January 1967

[1] Petar Marinkov - a career diplomat, Ambassador to Colombia and Ecuador (1979-1982), and to Cuba (1983-1986).