

October 5, 1967

**Bulgarian Communist Party Politburo Meeting
Regarding Bulgarian-Cuban Relations**

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Summary:

In a memorandum to the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party Politburo, Gero Grozev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, critiques the Cuban Communist Party and its approach to building socialism. Grozev describes Cuba's increasingly poor relations with European communist parties, interference in Latin American affairs, and misunderstanding of Marxist-Leninist principles. Grozev continues describing Cuban leaders as committed functionaries unaware of their mistakes. To correct Cuba's mistakes socialist countries should increase contact with the Cuban government and help it develop economically and mature politically.

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TO the CC BCP Politburo

INFORMATION

by G[ero] Grozev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

Re: Proposed measures for strengthening of the Bulgarian - Cuban Relations

[...]

Although the other socialist countries' experience in building socialism is not denied publicly, this experience has recently not been given due attention and Cuba's own development has been consistently focused on.

The Cuban government has propagated the thesis that material stimuli and benefits of the workers will result in the re-establishment of capitalism and the weakening of the workers' sense for international revolutionary action. Such an approach will inevitably result in actual wage leveling, which will, in its turn, seriously affect production.

Yet another postulate has proved to be confusing: the one that Cuba has been establishing socialism and communism simultaneously, adding that the latter cannot be built without abolishing imperialism completely.

[...]

It is well known that the Cuban government has adopted a strange stance on the issues of party and state construction and organization in Cuba; similar positions relate to the international communist movement and its development in the contemporary international situation. The higher posts of the Cuban Communist Party have been taken by the proponents of the "July 26th" Movement. 70% of the Central Committee's staff are military officials. Out of the 8 members of the Politburo, 6 are military officials; there is not a single member of the ex-People's Socialist Party elected to this central governing body.

For quite some time the Cuban Communist Party has made no official statements on the discord within the international communist movement. Up to the end of 1965 Fidel Castro openly opposed the Chinese leaders, for there was a conflict of interests between the Chinese and Cuban ambitions about playing a central political part in Latin America. Cuba's criticism of the Chinese government was based totally on its own positions and interests. The Chinese leaders' ideology and policies have not been condemned yet. Even though we cannot maintain, that the Cubans have actually adopted China's policies, they have adopted the same positions on certain issues, such as peaceful co-existence, material benefits and building up socialism.

A large part of the Cuban leaders' views of the world revolutionary movement's strategy and tactics, in general, and Latin America's, in particular, are contradictory to Marxism-Leninism's basic postulates and principles. Presuming the false postulate that the conditions for starting a revolution in almost all Latin American countries have ripened, the Cuban leaders have adopted a policy of interference in Latin America's communist parties and their internal affairs.

Cuba's interference in Venezuela's communist party, providing assistance to Douglas Bravo's faction, an ex-member of Politburo who was expelled from the Communist Party. On the part of Cuba's leaders, Venezuela's Communist Party was libeled and was referred to as "rightist," "opportunistic," and "treacherous."

An act of brutal interference in Colombia's communist party by Cuba's leaders was the setting up of a guerilla movement separated from its communist party.

Such a mistaken policy was approved of at the recently held conference of the Organization for Latin American Solidarity.

The relations between the Cuban communist party and the European communist parties have grown colder for the last few years. No Cuban delegation attended the German Unified Socialist Party's congress.

Cuba's leadership does not share the views of the USSR and the other socialist countries of the peaceful co-existence policy that these countries have been conducting. Cuba refused to sign the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty; Cuba does not approve of establishing diplomatic and trade relations with the capitalist Latin American countries, pointing out that such relations support local oligarchies and hold the revolutionary process back. In this respect the resolution of OLAS (Organization for Latin American Solidarity) was adopted.

The Cuban leaders have been conducting an isolationist policy towards certain liberal and democratic parties and their functionaries in the other Latin American countries, thus isolating themselves from their natural allies and friends on the continent.

The Cuban leaders have manifested the adopted policy of actively assisting Latin America's revolutionary movement, thus facilitating the reactionary regime's activity aimed at enhancing terrorism and establishing the so called "American forces" to act against Cuba both in Latin America and the USA.

Despite all mistakes made, there is a general conviction that the core of Cuba's leadership consists of frank functionaries committed to their people's cause, unaware of their mistaken views and sincerely believing that they have adopted the right policy in the interest of the revolutionary process.

Political, economic and cultural relations between the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Cuba were established after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution. Our government has been assisting Cuba actively and it has defended Cuba against the offence of the US imperialism.

Apart from the economic and cultural agreements at the government level, agreements for cooperation between public and political organizations and creative unions were concluded; these agreements play an important part in our getting to know each other and establishing closer relations. Useful and fruitful contacts were established between our Comsomol,[1] the Bulgarian Union for Sports and the corresponding Cuban organizations. An important step towards expanding the economic, scientific and technological cooperation between Cuba and Bulgaria was the setting up of an inter-governmental commission for economic, scientific and technological cooperation.

The trade between the two countries has marked an increase by 38,633,000 USD in 1966 from 500,000 USD in 1960. The basic shares of our exports to Cuba are machines and technological equipment - about 45%, and food - about 40%. Our major import item from Cuba is sugar and molasses. Trade for the current year is expected to go beyond 50 mln. USD with a positive balance of trade for Bulgaria.

[...]

The People's Republic of Bulgaria has extended Cuba five loans amounting to a total

of 15,800 000 USD, 9,300,000 of which are supplies of special equipment.

About 200 Bulgarian specialists are now working in Cuba, a Comsomol brigade of 100 people, mainly agricultural workers. 39 Bulgarian musicians are also working in Cuba at present. All these specialists' work has been highly appreciated by a number of high-level Cuban leaders, including Castro.

[...]

The development of the trade relations between the two countries has been beneficial and fruitful to both countries so far. Cuba turned out to be an interesting market for the articles of Bulgaria's machine-building industry, the tractors "Bolgar" in particular and other items, and at the same time Cuba proved to be an experimental basis for testing our products in tropical climate. There are the necessary conditions to supply Cuba with complex properties. The benefits and political importance of the cultural contacts are beyond any doubt. There arises the question what policy towards Cuba is to be adopted in the future, since the Cuban leaders have been conducting policies quite different from those of the [other] socialist countries. We consider that expanding and intensifying our cooperation in terms of party and political relations, cultural exchange, and public and creative organizations, is the appropriate policy. Tolerant, calm and frank talks with the Cuban comrades on all levels so as to persuade them to give up the present harmful policies are necessary.

It is considered appropriate that the relations in the field of science and technology, as well as the economic relations be further developed. Such a policy will stimulate building socialism in Cuba, and will contribute to socialist Cuba's increasing role as a suit to follow by the other Latin American countries.

On the other hand, a deepening of the economic relations between Cuba and the socialist countries, and thus the higher dependence of Cuba's economy upon the socialist countries' [economies], will make the Cuban leaders refrain from making "weird" statements.

The following measures are considered appropriate to this effect:

In the sphere of political relations.

Ministries, agencies, institutions, public organizations and artistic unions must follow a policy of expanding and strengthening the relations and cooperation with the respective Cuban bodies and authorities.

A Party and State delegation is to visit Cuba, headed by comrade Todor Zhivkov at the beginning of 1968. During the visit of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Fidel Castro's visit to Bulgaria is to be agreed upon and arranged.

A Party delegation, headed by a member of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party is to visit Cuba this autumn, or at the beginning of 1968 to get acquainted with the organizational and ideological work of the Cuban Communist Party. A delegation headed by a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party is to be invited to visit Bulgaria in 1968 to get acquainted with the organizational and ideological work of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

The Higher Party School is to establish relations with the revolutionary education schools in Cuba, and invite a delegation to visit Bulgaria, so that it may share our Higher Party School's experience, as well as our experience in the field of education

and enlightenment in general.

The department of "Foreign Policy and International Relations" at the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party is to regularly provide an exchange of information and statements on different issues of mutual interest to both countries.

[...]

A proposal made to Cuba to have military attaches exchanged between the two countries.

In the sphere of economic relations.

The State Commission on Planning and Forecasting and the Ministry of Foreign Trade are to submit proposals about additional events on expanding the import and export product range to and from Cuba, so that the trade balance may be evened. These suggestions are to be submitted to the Commission of Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation at the Council of Ministers by 1 December 1967. The focus of our attention must be an increase in our exports of machines and plants.

[...]

Sofia, 22 September 1967,
Gero Grozev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

[1] Dimitrov's Communist Youth Union.