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Italian Communist Journalist Carmine De Lepsis, Interview with Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, Havana

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Summary:

In an interview with journalist Carmine De Lepsis, Che Guevara discusses the future development of the Cuban economy, the improvement in productivity and the establishment of new labor laws, dealing with the exodus of technicians, and in general part of the lower middle class, and compares the situation in Cuba to Latin America in general.

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(portions in bold-face published in the Italian communist newspaper Paese Sera on 26-27 October 1962 under the headline, "GUEVARA: The economic blockade of Cuba has failed")

FULL TEXT (RECONSTRUCTED FROM NOTES) OF THE INTERVIEW HELD BY COMRADE CARMINE DE LEPSIS WITH MINISTER ERNESTO "CHE' GUEVARA FOR "PAESE SERA" IN HAVANA, SEPTEMBER 29, 1962

The interview with Ché Guevara was part of a group of interviews with Cuban leaders (Fidel Castro, Raul Castro, Raul Roa, and the Ché Guevara) for which I made a request to the Press Office of the Cuban Foreign Ministry just after my arrival (the first attachment is a copy of my working plan presented to the Foreign Ministry). The interviews should be structured to cover the whole situation: the defense of Cuba from the possibility of an aggression (Raul Castro); the international situation related to Cuba; the problem of Catholics (Fidel Castro); economic development (Ché Guevara); and international relations of Cuba, especially with Latin America (Raul Roa). As is clear, I exaggerated with my requests because I knew I would have got just some. And that's what happened: I had only the interview with Che Guevara, in which I inquired about almost all the other topics for the interviews I didn't get. A written request (second attachment) preceded this interview, with all the questions and some notes - written by me - for the newspaper I work for and for a biography. The request was made on the 21st of September; the interview was given, more or less, one week later. It seems to me that, before giving the interview Ché requested some information about me from the Cuban Institute of Friendship with people and to the Foreign Ministry. The conversation took place, as I said in the published text, at the behest of the interviewee from 1.30 to 4.00 in the morning (so in conditions, at least for me, not ideal). There was, other than me and the interviewee, a young escort of the Institute of Friendship that didn't want to leave the office, I believe to show off in front of a Cuban leader. I made a weak attempt to make him go away, then he remained. It seemed to me that the presence of the young boy was damaging for the course of the interview, because Guevara was giving, sometimes, laconic answers, not thorough and motivated. After some pleasantries the conversation started with a personal note. I told to Guevara that I was particularly attached to him because two years before during a rally at which he spoke, I met a Cuban girl that now is my wife. That note helped to make the conversation more familiar.

DE LIPSIS: I present to you a list of written questions. Then I am going to ask you some questions that come from the impressions I had during my stay in Cuba. We are going to split it up into what can be published and what can't.

GUEVARA: (He is a little upset with the written questions) These are all questions on economic matters, so I will try to answer to them all together. The fundamental successes achieved in the four years since our revolution have been preserved despite the freeze. The most serious problem with which Fidel, me and the all the other men of the Sierra, had to face right after the victory was the complete dependence of our economy on the United States. Cuba, when we took it, wasn't a underdeveloped country but a badly developed country: the monoculture of sugar, as it's known, and of a few other products was the distinguishing mark of our economy, where backwardness of some sectors and high technical standards in others were coexisting. Other than the monoculture, everything else was for local market only. Cuba was forced to sell at international prices but forced, instead, to buy at the prices imposed by the United States. Everything here was controlled by the USA, mainly the banks, the means of transport, etc..., the biggest purchaser of our sugar.

The US brought in their enterprises with advanced technology. We found ourselves, upon nationalizing the means of production, facing the problem of guaranteeing their continued operation and, so, of having a base of spare parts that usually socialist countries don't have. The same is true for raw materials: from the socialist countries we can import only similar products. Despite these difficulties we managed to guarantee the yearly growth of industrial production, if you don't consider the sugar

sector, of 7%.

We can now lay the foundation for the spread of industrialization and not limit ourselves to develop what already exists.

At the end of the next four-year-period we'll gain a big metallurgic basis and I believe that we'll be able to maintain the rate of growth at the [rate of] 7%. On the other hand we must consider that now our economy is, for sure, opened while previously the American domination was barring the development of other sectors.

With agriculture the situation is more difficult: we suffered damages because of the drought that hit our country in the strongest measure ever registered in the last 40 years. I have to say that some mistakes in the organization of the agricultural production have been made. But, today we can be sure that even in this sector there is now constant growth.

DE LIPSIS: At your conference, in which I participated in two years ago, I remember you saying that Cuba shouldn't be considered an underdeveloped country but a badly developed country due to monoculture. Were you able to change this situation?

GUEVARA: No, the monoculture aspect of our economy has still not changed, but it's changing: we need the sugar, the coffee, and tobacco to provide us the currency fund.

Let's get to the second question: what will be the future development of the Cuban economy etc...[?] One of our main aims is the self-sufficiency for our semi-tropical products and to develop some specialization that would allow us to export all over the world. This development of the industrial sector, will be realized on the basis of a technology equal to [that of] some of the most advanced countries. We'll have a steel industry for the processing of a special steel, we'll develop the chemistry related to the production of sugar, and electronics (that is for us a fundamental issue), that is what we consider one of our main goals; we'll increase the mining, the engineering industry (to strengthen the other industries) and, also, the maritime industry.

We need to keep in mind that our economy is linked to the big international markets; Cuba is an import-export country, we cannot be limited to the local market.

Let's pass to the third question: what kind of influence did the [US economic] blockade have on the economic projects of the government... It had a double effect of deterrent for the economy I) troubles supplying foodstuff II) deficiencies in the development of the economy. It forced us to make some sacrifices for the basis of rational development. Our duty now is fast development of the engineering sector and the creation of new products of good quality. But the same difficulties created by the blockade have been motivation for the popular masses, whose enthusiasm has allowed us to ensure a constant growth of our production. In its main goal, therefore, the blockade failed: with the help of the popular masses and from the socialist countries, we can keep pushing forward, even far forward.

Let's get to the other questions (Guevara skips the question about the governmental measures for overcoming the difficulties in the supplying of food items and approaches the one about the changes to the economic plans of the government - ed)¹

D.L.: Some weeks ago the weekly journal of our party Rinascita published one of your speeches on the matter. Is there something new compared to what you said on that occasion?

G: No, there's not. On the other hand it wasn't much time ago. So we can pass to the question on the meaning of the three part rallying cry: Produce, save, organize. These issues are related. An increase of production is necessary to supply the population. Now we need to save as much as possible because of the lack we have of a supply shortage. The saving goes hand in hand with the organization. Even if [unreadable] we need to improve the growth of productivity, trying to modify the absurd salary system that there was before in Cuba.

D.L.: On the improvement in productivity and the establishment of new labor laws, are you trying to lean on moral factors (as the minister of the labor Augusto Martinez Sanchez ed.) or focus on the material gains?

G: The moral factors are still important, but let's not forget the material gains that are implicit in the socialist system. The basis of this system is the same as the one found in other socialist countries with a few differences. Now we are on more solid ground. At the heart of the new society that we're building is the working man. That's why productivity is of a fundamental importance. We prefer to close the factories that can't achieve a high level of productivity and send the workers to work somewhere else or to study, than to let them be unproductive. We observed that with what you can save on one side you can cover the expenses for the other workers that are not working anymore or who are studying to specialize. These young workers sent to study are attending courses in two phases 1) until the 6th year 2) toward a specialization. We concentrated the production and with the same vigor we are preparing new "cadre". There is going to be a successively more elevated phase, more elevated to get them to be more specialized.

D.L.: So you're working toward a concentration, a centralization of the economy? That is going to cause an elimination, in the short term, of the small private production, of the small commerce, etc.?

G.: Yes. We need to produce with high-level technological processes.

D.L.: Of course, it's socialism in America, there's a need for strong productivity! It's a matter of making Socialism in America, not as it was done in the Soviet Union.

G.: (Nods) I'm going to say something about that but it must not be published....

D.L.: (Nods)

G.: We have disagreement with the Soviets about that ... They insist that we should introduce collective economic management and financial autonomy in the factories. There is a debate on this matter. We insist, on the contrary, on the centralization of the economy, the way we chose is the concentration of the production. A pesar que nos llaman from the Spanish text one could translate in Italian as "no matter what or in spite of it we are called revisionist."

D.L.: Rivisionistà in Italian.

G.: Looks at me a little surprised and stays silent.

D.L.: But what's going to happen to the 150,000 small artisans?

G: He doesn't answer and goes back to the written questions. We'll do all that we can to ensure the growth of the technological progress. We want to reach the top level of technology. I can't tell when it's going to happen. We have, already, one third or one

fourth of the sugar cane production mechanized and in two or three years the collection of sugar cane will be mechanized, with machinery created in Cuba, and constructed in Cuba. All this industrial installation will be used to rapidly mechanize agriculture. (And he passes to the question about the trip to USSR.) We signed some agreements for the installation of a small steel factory in Havana, and for the construction, on the eastern part of the Cuban island, of a big steel plant that will produce 1 million 3 hundred thousand tons of steel per year.

D.L.: Will it be a Kombinat?

G.: Yes, it will be a complete Kombinat and it will utilize nickel and a special kind of cobalt, that is found on the island: laterite. (About his trip to USSR, he doesn't say any more and he passes to the last question about relations with Italy.) The relations between Cuba and Italy could be much improved. All the more because your country, having an advanced industrial system, could replace, for some items, the United States. Italy has many products that for us are really interesting, and already some Italian enterprises came forward, like the Oronzio di Nora company from whom we bought completely equipped factories. We are ready to buy whatever we need, it's up to Italy having a similar interest.

D.L.: I had the chance to talk with some diplomats from the Italian Embassy in Cuba. I'm going to tell you about some of their opinions, but before [that] I have to warn you that the old staff of the Embassy is of a clear Fascist nature, and so I don't know how much their opinions can be considered valid. Concerning our new Ambassador my opinion is different, he's a reasonable person (I was referring to the fact that Ambassador [Gian Luigi Milesi?] Ferretti mentioned to me to a few criticisms about the US policy toward Cuba, sustaining a line similar to the one kept by England in the crisis in the Caribbean--ed. note2) but these are our businesses, of the media and of us, Italian democrats. We'll see what is possible to do unblock the situation (the old staff of the Embassy praised the Batista regime to me and had negative things to say about the one of Fidel Castro--ed.3). At the Italian Embassy they say that one of reasons that the commerce between Italy and Cuba is not increasing, could be the missing payment by the latter of almost one million dollars, which Italian enterprises have had on their books since prior to the revolution.

G.: I remember perfectly this situation, because at the time i was the director of the National Bank. But all that is about the interest of Italy in trading with us. You cannot trade just from one side. These credits can be repaid when we'll be able to, anyway with new relations, when you have a mutual interest, anything can be cleared up (the answers to the written questions have ended, now we start an extemporaneous dialogue).

D.L.: The difficulties you are finding are due only to the blockade or also to, let's say, subjective problems?

G.: The blockade caused us some distortions, and forced some structural changes, but the difficulties we have to deal with are also due to some subjective problems, first of all the poor organization of the revolutionary party that must be the ideological engine of the production, it has to ensure the ideological control. There were episodes of hoarding in the Party (in Cuba, when they talk about the party they refer to old P.S.P. - the Socialist Popular Party, (communist)-ed.4), and centralization.

D.L.: Bureaucratization?

G.: Yes, bureaucratization. We entrusted the old party with so much power because we were in need, right away, of experts and of solid system. But things didn't go as we expected, they were accumulating offices, centralizing the power, and

bureaucratizing the relations with the masses. At one point we realized that even the statistics that were given to us about the production in the different provinces were wrong, and we ended up losing control of the situation: mistakes both in agriculture and industry were accumulating. So, when we realized that things were not working right, we looked at ourselves and faced a problem: Comrade X summons the workers so that at 6 in the morning they go to volunteer work. At six in the morning, all the workers are there but not comrade X. He shows up at ten in a government car; he checks the number of those present, and leaves. Someone protests, an inquiry is opened and is found out that comrade X lives in a luxury apartment, property of a rich Cuban exiled to the US. The Committee of the Party approves his expropriation request, because his home is unsafe.

D.L : That's unbelievable in a revolution, like this one, so full of strength in the ideals.

G.: And then there's the story about people expelled from the old communist party that revealed themselves, instead, to be good revolutionaries... there are people that just want to boast of thirty years in the party. Ok, but then there's also the years, '31, '32, '33...

D.L: They are the ones that in Italy we call Stalinist "trombones."

G: Anyway we all agree, what would do the job is a party that would be the engine of the revolution and we are building it on a new basis, since the experiment with the old PSP didn't go well. There are going to be also aspirations for a new period of change.

D.L.: There's not a risk of building an "elitist" party divorced from the masses?

G: We'll try to create an operative party, controlled by the workers. Let's try this new method and let's see where it leads.

D.L.: Even if we grant for the sake of argument that the sectarianism issue can be eliminated just with the criticism of the old communists, don't you think that more gradual progress of the revolution toward the some part of the population, [such] as the middle and lower middle class, would have been more appropriate? I'm referring to what happened in the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (the neighborhood organisms of the revolution installed home by home ed.). The one that I saw was working well, but they told me that in other places the volunteer work, in a word, that they are pushing toward a sharp proletarianization also of the culture.

G: The volunteer work is, voluntary... (talking to the young escort that didn't say a word for the whole conversation) . But we have also allowed for example, a center for doctors where these professionals could meet, even talk negatively about the government... (then he takes up the conversation with an irritated tone, upset with my question) we can coexist with the lower middle class, but not on the basis of mutual concessions on principles...

D.L: You mean accepting the proletarian hegemony.

G: (Changing the tone, to be more incisive)... coexistence, but accepting the ways of development of the revolution. On this question there's need to be intransigent. Of course, on this basis, many from the lower middle class, do not march and decide to leave Cuba.

D.L: I'm not discussing the line followed by the leaders of the revolution, but are you sure that that is well applied?

G.: Of course the problem depends, also, from the way in which this policy is applied. The petite bourgeois wants the car, the trip to Miami for the week-end, the refrigerator ...

D.L.: All things that the revolution can't give to them.

G: Nods, the petit bourgeois was living in a North American way, which in has in many ways different characteristics than that of the petite bourgeois in Europe. It is a certain practical (utilitarian - ed.5) sense of life (I did not quite understand what he mean by this during our discussion - ed.5) There is a racial component that is important here too. Anyway we should look at the relationship with that we have had with our clergy and priests (he stands up and makes a gesture of contempt with his hand as if to say "go to hell" -ed.) Now, the priests come to us asking if we can't live together. Now to the Nunziatura Apostolica they have sent a nice young man who is quite active.

D.L: And what about the artisans, how are they dealing with the socialization?

G: The Cuban artisans are not like the Europeans. I don't know Europe, but I know it well in Argentina because of the immigrants. And I can say how things are in the middle classes... Instead the Cuban artisans wouldn't have any trouble adjusting and going to work in a factory, because they are not so attached to the work of their workshop.

D.L: What percent of industry is already socialized?

G. 95%

D.L: Do you think about how the socialization will proceed?

G.: Nods

D.L.: I did some personal research around the shops of Galiano and San Rafael (the commercial streets of Havana - ed.) and I found out that they sell many items. For what concerns the food, I had the impression that in Havana one can eat pretty well, that the essential items, in the end, are not missing, but in the province of Pinar del Rio (I look at the young man) where we have been, things for the farmers are much different, they are missing also the rationed food (in this area the farmers were getting 300 gr[ams] of meat every month, instead in Havana 1 kg and a half)... there is a huge gap (I was talking about the fact that in some areas many things were missing that in other areas were available, among them vital things like salt and matches - ed.6)

G: In the countryside one has to make do... we have made a particular effort in Havana, where the counter-revolution is stronger. And you have to keep in mind that in Havana we have to feed almost 100.000 "becados" (students holding a scholarship) and, gosh, they eat, and they eat every day!

D.L: The impression that I had during my stay about the three main internal factors of the revolution, the military one, the political one and the economic one is the following: the military one is going well; from the marching units you can see a real army; the political one too, the revolution keeps having the popular support; but the economic one ... that's where you can see some discontent, "en la calle" ["on the street"] - I'm sorry if I'm being rude but I'm communist too and we're serving a common interest - is missing because it get lost during the way or because it just not there.

G: Just not there.

D.L.: "How do you think to deal with the exodus of technicians, and in general part of the lower middle class?"

G: Some of our Polish and Hungarian friends, warned us to be prudent with the lower middle class (here he was talking with a tone that seemed to me pretty upset -- ed.7) Some friends from socialist countries (I think that here he was talking about the Soviets ed.) asked us why we let them go away. We don't force anyone to stay. There was the case of some technicians who clearly told us that they didn't want to stay any more. And we told them: Ok, but before [going] you have to finish your job. And they finished their job (and he makes a gesture with the hand like that of a well-oiled machinery and they went.

D.L.: Did you do that for ethical reasons ... practicality?

G.: Both for ethical and a practical reasons: we prefer the old counter-revolutionary technician to go, so he won't have a bad influence on young people that we are grooming by the tens of thousands.

D.L: Don't you think that there is a unrealistic expectation for the foreign technician? Do you think that the technician can stand for the organization? The technician can be a technician; but how can the foreign technician be the one that organizes people in a country with a different mentality, so different from them, who, on their side too, have a different way of looking at things?

G: I agree with you, the technician without a structure is nothing; the structure without the technician can, slowly, go on; the best thing, obviously, is having both. Apart from that we have Soviet technicians who are working wonderfully.

D.L: Marxism is entering the heart of the Cuban people. But sometimes one has the impression that it has taken a religious form instead of [a] rationalist [form]. A few days ago I saw a militant wearing an needlepoint badge: it was the face of a cherub surrounded by an aura of gold. I asked her what was it about, thinking it was a religious thing, and she answered me: "it's Lenin when he was a kid."

G: (Smiles and doesn't say anything.)

D.L: ... I've been to the "festival de los aficionados" (festival of the lovers of folk music and dance founded by the workers from Havana) and the majority of the bands I saw were imitations of Russian or Czechoslovakian song and dance: can it be a manifestation of affection for the socialist countries, but does not all that affect the patriotic sentiment of Cubans?

G: We had Soviet bands, Hungarian, and Polish that had a great success. Not to speak of the Polish dancers (he smiles mischievously8)

D.L: I'm not talking about the bands coming from the Eastern countries; they came also in Italy and had a great success, I'm talking about the Cuban bands, made of Cubans, but dressed like Cossacks and talking like Russians from Kharkov [in Soviet Ukraine].

G: (He smiles again, like to agree with what I was saying) Here we had the Spartakiadi (a sporting event in the stadiums like the ones that are organized in Czechoslovakia--ed.9) with the girls moving the hoops here and there (making

gesture as to mime something unpleasant).

D.L: To get back to the topic of a certain kind of "religious" manifestations, i have some journalistic impressions that may be superficial: at the Congress of the Federation of the Cuban Women, on the stage there was a big board with the slogans of the congress and the image of a woman with a baby, that looked exactly like the Virgin Mary...

G: (He doesn't talk)

D.L: Let's move to the situation of Cuba projected onto Latin America: it's impossible to deny that in this context Cuba is isolated. Even Fidel noticed it. I'm not talking about an ideological isolation, which it is not, but about a political one. How do you think should be remedied? What's going to happen?

G.: The future is unpredictable: who can say what's going to happen in the future? The isolation of Cuba is real, of course.... the imperialists are preparing for military intervention all over Latin America. And so the expectations are for huge armed battles by the revolutionary forces... there is going to be a direct intervention from the US imperialists, so the word should be given to mainly to the armed struggle.

D.L: In Latin America there is huge revolutionary potential, but isn't a complex and differentiated organization missing[?] Who can organize the enormous masses of the farmers?

G: (He winces and I have the impression that what I said about the farmers is what he thinks too. But this harmony revealed to be a misunderstanding during the rest of the conversation, because actually I meant a totally different thing: that before leading the masses to the armed struggle there's the need to get organized with democratic demands and necessary alliances --ed.10). No. I'm going to say some things but it is better not to publish them... Because they accuse us of wanting to be the "popes" of the revolution, and we don't want to interfere in the politics of the "popular fronts," that have their different managers of the progressive forces on the Latin America. The only country in which there is a positive situation for the politics of the "Fronte Popular" is Chile; where the "Popular Front" could keep going on and gain some power. But how is the action of the communist party?! it's "flaca" (weak, and he makes a gesture as to mean that it is very weak--ed.11) There are parties that are born in the city, and are closed in the cities. Let's look at how we did it here in Cuba: an armed force that from the mountains went and lead directly to the heart of the enemy, went straight to the power and took it....not to talk about the strikes, the actions of the masses....

D.L.: There's need for building alliances for the masses of farmers, and to consider the lower middle class.

G.: (With a gesture of irritation) but, in the end, what is this myth of the petit bourgeois?

D.L: But I was talking about revolutionary alliances, farmers' conflicts, starting from the occupation of the land.

G.: There's a need to hit the national armies... the only solution is the armed struggle all the way.

D.L: Are there other forces ready to stand up against the United States? Let's look at the revolt of Porto Cabello undergone by military forces; let's look at some

anti-yankee positions in some strata of the Brazilian army and - like the Argentine comrade, that is also a friend of yours, told me - even - of a similar attitude in the Argentine army too!

G: What about the Argentine Army?! And concerning the revolt of Porto Cabello, it was not democratic: it was all about replacing one puppet with another. As far as we are concerned we tried to open up a dialogue with one of the "Frontes Populares," in which there is the lower-middle class, the one of [President C.J.] Arosemena [Monroy] in Ecuador. Two days after Fidel congratulated the victory of Arosemena, he cut all relations with Cuba.

D.L.: Just two more questions and we are done. One concerns economic matters, since you are an economist, the other is about the intellectuals. I would like to know how things are going in agriculture; are the farmers dealing with collectivization?

G: (laughing) But I'm not an economist! As I have already said we are having some troubles in agriculture but even in this field the production is growing. The farmers are accepting the collectivization up to a point, some strata do better accept the cooperatives.

D.L: Are there different kinds of cooperatives, like in popular democracies with a certain gradual socialization of the means of productions and in the distribution of profits?

G: There is just one kind, the mixed one. The Cuban farmer does not have the attachment to the land.

D.L.: Like in Europe ...

G.: ... but, in some ways, he keeps it.

D.L: I have been talking to many intellectuals. They exposed to me the problem of "Lunes de Revolución" (the literary weekly of the daily newspaper "Revolución", suppressed - I could not go deeper into the matter - it seemed to me, with brisk [administrative] measure--ed.12). Now the same things that were written on the "Lunes de Revolución" are written in the "Gaceta de Cuba" (the new weekly of the Union of the Writers, directed by Nicolas Guillen where two groups, more and more polemical, are coexisting, one of the old comrades that reports to Guillen, and the one of the youths of the "26 July" looking with favor at the PCI, and that utilized, in my opinion in a clumsy way and just for internal interests against the old communists, some scripts of [PCI leader Palmiro] Togliatti--ed.13)

G.: Not only are they writing the same things, but also, it's the same people who write.

D.L: And that's a sign of tolerance or of a lack of a political culture?

G.: Everything started with a film about Havana completely made in the old style. From the new Havana, with the militiamen and the militia, there was nothing. We tolerated it, but then we had to intervene. Our position on the intellectuals, has been expressed by Fidel: until they don't attack the Revolution that we are making, we don't take much care of them, we're not experts in that field. I can say something on the Cuban ballet, for example, on the Licia Alonso's ballet (and here he starts with a long digression about pros and cons of the Alonso's ballet. Of course they could not, and cannot, accept, all that "mariconadas" - to mean pedophilia - and all those sexual storylines).

D.L.: My journalistic duties impose me to ask you some more questions about your private life.

G: (Standing up) No, no, for God's sake...

D.L.: Some of the bourgeois newspapers wrote that you are the grey eminence of the revolution, the "deus ex machine."

G: Yes, I know that. They did that trying to oppose me to Fidel, and even more to Raul, to show that there is rivalry among us. Nonsense... instead I should be clear about something (while flipping through his book - that I showed him - "Guerrilla Warfare" translated in Italian by the socialist publisher "Il Gallo"--ed.14). On the cover, it is written that I work from 6 in the afternoon until 6 in the morning, in company only of two revolvers and my working documents: I would like to point out that I have just one revolver, and above all that I have my wife.

D.L.: I'll show you the written text of the interview, and you will tell me what can be published and what can't.

G.: No, no everything can be published but the two things I have told you not to.

(That means, the disagreements with the Soviets about collective management problems, and the direct controversy with the "progressive" parties (to read as communist) in the Latin America. On the last point I didn't get if the veto was limited to just this last part or over all the judgments about Latin America. I didn't have time to insist, because it was already 4:30 in the morning when we finished the interview and Guevara had already led us to the door. I kept the word given about the first topic and I solved the uncertainty about the second one keeping for the piece written in "Paese Sera" - written hastily, in the editorial office, pushed by several sides, and compelled to do, at the same time, the right thing - the controversial parts with the Chilean communist party and with the other parties. Some days after, since my departure was delayed, through the writer [Roberto Fernández] Retamar, a friend of mine that was meeting with Guevara, I asked him if he had been offended by any of my questions. Guevara let me know that he wasn't, that I just had done my job of journalist. He didn't let me know anything about the check on the written text that I asked from him. I had the impression that he just didn't care. At the door, while saying goodbye, with vague words he just told me: "Just publish the interview, then, eventually, I'll see.")

[1] [In original-ed.]

[2] [In original-ed.]

[3] [In original-ed.]

[4] [In original-ed.]

[5] [In original-ed.]

[6] [In original-ed.]

[7] [In original-ed.]

[8] [Trans. note: The original Italian word, maliziosamente, can also be translated as "maliciously"-but without the weighted negative connotations of the English word-or "artfully."]

[9] [In original-ed.]

[10] [In original-ed.]

[11] [In original-ed.]

[12] [In original-ed.]

[13] [In original-ed.]

[14] [In original-ed.]