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**From the Journal of A.I. Alekseyev, 'Record of a
Conversation with Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, Member
of the National Leadership of the ORO, 4 March
1963'**

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Summary:

Carlos Rafael Rodriguez reflects on Cuba's international stature, an upcoming ORO National Leadership meeting, and divisive Chinese activity in Cuba.

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from the journal of
A. I. ALEKSEYEV

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with Carlos RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, member of the
National Leadership of the ORO

4 March 1963

I met with Rodriguez and had a long conversation with him.

1. Touching on general political questions, Rodriguez spoke in the sense that, in his opinion, the international position of Cuba has considerably strengthened and the danger of direct aggression from the US has diminished after the Caribbean Crisis and especially recently after Cde. N. S. Khrushchev's and Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky's speeches. Rodriguez said, these speeches had especially great importance for the Cuban people and the strengthening of Cuban-Soviet relations and have served to further increase the authority of the USSR and to exercise a restraining influence on the US.

Then Rodriguez said that a meeting of the National Leadership of the ORO will be held on 7 March at which the question of the timeframe for Fidel Castro's trip to the USSR and the CPSU CC letter on the question of relations with the CPC will be discussed. Referring to the opinion of the Cuban leadership, Rodriguez declared that the CPSU CC letter of 21 February of this year was taken very favorably. This was in particular facilitated in many respects by the recent publication in the Chinese magazine "Red Banner [Krasnoye Znamya]" of a crude anti-Soviet article, and also by attempts by Chinese representatives to use Cuba as a base for divisive and anti-Soviet activity. In Rodriguez's words, Cuban newspapers and radio have been given instructions not to publish divisive Chinese materials and in general to approach all Chinese information critically.

The Chinese, said Rodriguez, are especially at a disadvantage in Cuba because of their attacks on the leaders of the Communist Parties of France and Italy, who enjoy respect here.

[in English]: [BRAZIL]

At his own initiative Rodriguez said further that, as Fidel Castro told him about this, he, Fidel, remained satisfied with the conversations with C. Prestes and regrets that he could not meet with him earlier. Castro completely agreed with the policy of the Brazilian Communists directed at support of Goulart. In Rodriguez's words, after the conversation with C. Prestes Fidel talked about this question with Juliao especially, trying to instill in him the need for a more flexible policy with respect to the government of Brazil. Speaking of his own attitude toward Juliao, Rodriguez said that Juliao suffers from a rebellious anarchist disease and evidently does not have broad support in his own country. Here, in Cuba, he enjoys great attention from the press inasmuch as his militant revolutionary statements impress the Cubans.

2. Referring to Fidel's approval, Rodriguez addressed a request to the Soviet government to consider the question of delivering 5,000 tons of coffee to Cuba in

June and July which we bought in Brazil, in connection with the fact that in this year the Cubans have only enough of their own reserves until August. The Cuban government could return this quantity of coffee to the Soviet Union in autumn of 1964 when a large increase in the production of this crop is expected in connection with the cyclical nature of the coffee plantations' harvest. Cuba needs to spend \$2 million to buy the aforementioned quantity of coffee in Brazil and, in addition, there is no confidence that the Americans will allow this deal to be concluded. The Cuban government cannot restrict the consumption of coffee or introduce [ration] cards for it inasmuch as it would be taken in the people as the bankruptcy of the revolution.

In reply to my comment whether such an operation will cause an undesirable reaction from Brazil which might see it as re-export, Rodriguez said that, in his opinion, this question could be settled with the Brazilian government without difficulty.

Saying that I don't know the amount of coffee we buy in Brazil, or whether we have the reserves to meet the Cubans' request, I promised to consult with the competent organizations in Moscow about this question.

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USSR AMBASSADOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA (A. ALEKSEYEV)