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Record of Discussions and Conversations between Cde. L. I. Brezhnev and Cde. F. Castro and Other Cuban Leaders, 29 January-2 February 1974

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Summary:

This document contains records of three conversations had between L. I. Brezhnev and Fidel Castro during Brezhnev's visit to Cuba. Castro welcomes Brezhnev to Cuba and the two leaders clearly state the friendship felt between their countries. They also speak about the political and economic situations of Cuba and the USSR, Soviet military aid to Cuba, conflict in the Middle East and Africa, and socialist movements in Latin America.

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Top SecretRECORD OF DISCUSSIONS AND CONVERSATIONS*

between Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV and Cde. F. CASTRO and other Cuban leaders

* Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV did not review the record.

29 January 1974

F. CASTRO Firstly, I want to greet Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV and the other Soviet comrades in the name of the Politburo of the CC of the Communist Party of Cuba and to express enormous satisfaction that they are here among us.

We are convinced that your visit, Cde. Brezhnev, has enormous importance for the fates of our countries. This is an inspiring event for all Cuban Communists and all Cuban workers.

A deep happiness rules among our people. You well know of those strong friendly sentiments which we all feel toward you, Cde. Brezhnev, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and all the Soviet people. Today a big rally will be held on Revolution Square. This will be the largest mass rally in the entire history of the Cuban Revolution. And you will be able to see with your own eyes the attitude of the Cuban people toward the emissaries of the country of Lenin.

But right now I would like to give the floor to Cde. Brezhnev. We are ready to hear him for as much time as necessary, with all [our] attention.

L. I. BREZHNEV Dear Cde. Fidel Castro! Dear Cde. Dorticos! Dear Cde. Raul Castro! Dear Cuban friends!

I am pleased in fulfilling an assignment of the CPSU CC Politburo to pass on to you, all the Cuban comrades, warm greetings from our Party, from all Soviet Communists.

I consider it my duty to say some words of gratitude to you, Fidel, to all the Cuban friends, for that cordiality with which you have greeted me and my colleagues.

We have never had doubts of the strength and endurance of Soviet-Cuban friendship. However, it is one thing to know this and another to hear [it] directly. Yesterday's meeting will forever remain in our memory as a stirring demonstration of Soviet-Cuban friendship, and I want to again thank you, all the citizens of Havana, and all the Cuban people, for the sincerely fraternal reception.

For two days on the eve of the visit I had the opportunity to talk on the telephone with the leaders of the fraternal Parties. Of course, the comrades knew that I was travelling to you. I have a request from Cdes. Honecker, Gierek, Husak, Zhivkov, and Kadar to pass to you, Fidel and the CC of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Cuba, warm greetings from the leaders of the fraternal Parties. They are all pleased at our new meeting and welcome the visit, and they express confidence in its great importance. I would like to speak about just this at the very start of our meeting.

Our conversation can be constructed in different ways. We are friends, and I think it would be correct without excessive formalities to freely and openly consider all questions of interest to our Parties and countries. This concerns today's tasks as well as those of the future. We will be able to consider a considerable range of questions broadly; there are some questions, in particular military ones, which I would like to discuss with Cde. Fidel personally.

Evidently, along with questions of the development of Soviet-Cuban cooperation we will have to devote attention to an exchange of opinions about international problems, especially as important changes have been recently occurring in the world. If Cde. Fidel does not object then I will be guided by approximately such a procedure for our joint work

F. CASTRO I agree.

L. I. BREZHNEV First of all, concerning our relations. These are good relations. Deep respect, mutual understanding, and sincerity are characteristic of them. So it was in the past, so matters are now, and we are convinced so it will be in the future. I think that you share this assessment.

F. CASTRO I agree one hundred percent, but with one change, Soviet-Cuban relations are very good.

L. I. BREZHNEV Agreed.

We have already had the opportunity to become convinced that the Cuban press is devoting enormous attention to the visit. The press of our country is devoting no less attention to this visit. All the national newspapers and magazines daily publish a great number of materials about Cuba and about Soviet-Cuban relations.

The visit has not escaped the attention of the world press, too. An especially large number of comments have appeared in the world press after information was published about the specific timeframe of the visit. The tone of the comments varies, of course. But on the whole all come down to our visit being called upon to strengthen the friendship between the USSR and Cuba, that in current conditions this visit takes on enormous importance.

In itself the attention of the world press to our new meeting is instructive. And many Soviet delegations have come to Cuba in the past. You have had Cdes. Podgorny, Kosygin, and others of our comrades on visits. But perhaps [this is] the first time such a large number of Politburo and CPSU CC members have been here. I am speaking of this in order to stress the importance which our Party and the CC Politburo attach to this visit.

First of all I would like to inform you, comrades, of the domestic situation of the Soviet Union.

We have entered the fourth year of the five-year plan adopted by the 24th CPSU Congress. I want to note that the volume of tasks set by the plan is very great and their fulfillment requires intensive work.

Even before the Congress we repeatedly examined the draft five-year plan in the CC Politburo. There were several suggestions to reduce the amount of capital investment. We considered our capabilities with every care and in the final account rested on this number – 501 billion rubles in capital investment. This is the largest capital investment in the entire history of Soviet power.

We had to encounter great difficulties when working on putting everything planned by the directives of the Congress into effect. Exceptionally unfavorable weather conditions developed in our country in 1972. The observations of scientists showed that such a severe drought like in 1972 had not occurred in 100 years. There were such weather conditions only in 1866. We needed to take every step to ensure the continuous supply of the 250 million population of the country and to meet the many obligations to our friends from the socialist countries.

In the conditions which developed the Party turned to the people and performed great organizational work, mobilizing the workers in a struggle to [harvest] the grain. In this difficult year for three weeks I had to be in Siberia, where the harvest was not bad. We set ourselves the task of collecting the Siberian grain without loss, although it was very, very difficult to do this. The harvest period in this zone is quite short and it coincided with heavy rains. Our soldiers and enterprise workers came to the aid of the collective farmers. It used to be that grain was delivered to the elevators with a humidity on the order of 40-43 percent, and at times it was necessary to take grain from under snow. The people exhibited genuine heroism in those difficult conditions, and we were able to gather the necessary quantity of grain in order to provide the country's supply and the necessary minimum for deliveries to our socialist friends.

Already [back] in the winter of 1972-1973 careful preparation had begun to struggle for the 1973 harvest. You know of the results. We collected 222 million tons. Many republics, territories [*kraya*], and oblasts fulfilled and overfulfilled their commitments. For example, the Ukrainian comrades gathered one billion poods of grain for the first time in the entire history of the republic. One can see what the price of this grain was and with what intensity our people worked from the documentary film which we took with us. If there is time then maybe we will look at it. The narrator's text has already been translated into Spanish.

It is no accident that I began the discussion of our domestic situation with agriculture. Agricultural production has vital importance for any country. This relates in full measure to such a large country as the Soviet Union. What is more, for many years such a situation had developed that the agriculture of our country was a backward

sector. The harvests collected were small. Large capital investments in agriculture, the development of agricultural machinery, and a sharp increase of the production of chemical fertilizers were necessary in order to change the state of affairs. Moreover, it was necessary to raise the material incentive of the workers of the countryside, both collective farm workers as well as state farm workers. In a word, a complex approach was required to achieve a substantial improvement of agricultural production.

And the Party agreed to this. Right now we are not relaxing attention to the development of agriculture for a minute.

According to the budget we have allocated large funds to the needs of the countryside which are sufficient to accomplish an important program of reclamation work and the development of the industrial and housing construction in the countryside.

We are continuing to devote enormous attention to the development of agricultural machine building, [but] almost all factories engaged in the production of agricultural machinery are being rebuilt right now.

I would also like to note that much money for capital construction is being allocated by the collective and state farms themselves.

We have adopted a policy of creating more industrial machines for the countryside, more powerful and modern ones. Cde. Romanov, the First Secretary of the Leningrad Oblast' CPSU Committee, is here. At the present time they have begun the production of 300-HP K-701 tractors at the Kirov Plant in Leningrad. I have twice had the occasion to be at the plant.

F. CASTRO Tell [me], are these tractors tracked or wheeled?

L. I. BREZHNEV They are wheeled and are intended for use on mounts. At the same time these tractors can serve not only the countryside but also in forestry for logging. Kazakhstan and Siberia, where there are enormous tracts of land, are experiencing an especially acute need for them. One such tractor can plow up 45-50 hectares of land in a full day's work. The wide use of such tractors has a direct relationship to an increase of labor productivity.

As I have already said, a big program has been outlined to develop our chemical industry. We have planned to reach on the order of 90 million tons per year in this five-year plan to produce mineral fertilizers. We have discussed the state of affairs with the development of the chemical industry in the Politburo and have outlined a number of measures to help this sector of our industry.

In our country there exist such natural conditions when the caprices of weather can affect the harvest quite notably. The Central Committee of the Party and our government are persistently seeking to use all the latest scientific achievements in agriculture in order to lessen dependence on weather conditions. Chemicalization, reclamation work, and the introduction of the latest agricultural equipment in combination with the shock work of the workers of the collective and state farms, all this can provide a guarantee of obtaining relatively stable high yields.

We are orienting toward agricultural production being increasingly put on an industrial basis and specialized. This will allow the productivity of agricultural labor to be considerably increased.

I want to especially talk about the Party work in the countryside. Our Party considers it necessary to frankly tell the workers what is turning out well with us, and what is turning out badly with us. Right after the new year we made an appeal to all Communists and all the Soviet people, where the results of three years of the five-year plan were summed up and the new tasks of the upcoming period were defined, and called upon the workers to organize a mass socialist competition. In organizing a socialist competition we also use such a factor as material incentives: quite large amounts of money are allotted for monetary and material prizes to the winners of the competition.

We are also made wide use of moral stimuli. In particular, we have recently instituted an Order of Labor Glory in the country in three degrees which will be given to workers and collective farmers who have continually worked at one enterprise [or] at one collective farm for a lengthy period and who conscientiously fulfill their

responsibilities. Those awarded all degrees of the Order of Labor Glory will be given equal privileges with Heroes of Socialist Labor, that is, they will have the right to one free pass a year to a sanatorium or rest home and some other privileges.

F. CASTRO Tell [me], has anyone been given this Order?

L. I. BREZHNEV No. The award will be given this way. A person who has worked at an enterprise, let's say, 10-15 years, might get an Order of Labor Glory, third degree then, after a number of years, the second degree, and only after obtaining the Orders of the second and third degrees, can he be awarded an Order of Labor Glory, first degree. It is thought that the institution of this Order will play a useful role in reducing the turnover of personnel at enterprises and state and collective farms. We are ready to send you our newspapers, where the ordinance about this Order is presented. Look, maybe in some form this will be of interest to you, too.

R. CASTRO Our Revolution is already 15 years old. So Fidel and I can count on receiving the Order of Labor Glory. (general laughter)

L. I. BREZHNEV The Order has just been instituted. We still do not have the experience of awarding them. Let's wait. (general laughter).

We held a CC Plenum last December at which we discussed the progress of the fulfillment of the five-year plan. We carefully analyzed the operation of industry and the entire economy in a critical spirit.

In such a large economy as the Soviet economy unfortunately [we] still cannot avoid shortcomings and difficulties. We speak sharply about these shortcomings and difficulties in a Party way. Capital construction still goes on a long time and slowly, and at times with poor quality. There is a lack of coordination in the work of individual elements of the economy. It happens that initially the approximate cost of one or another enterprise is determined, let's say, at 500 million rubles, but as soon as the foundation is laid the corresponding agencies demand 600, and then 700 million rubles. We consider it necessary to wage a vigorous fight against all these shortcomings.

On the whole we are coping with planning tasks, although I do not conceal that we have to spend an enormous amount of money for the army. But these expenses are still necessary. As long as the imperialist countries wage an arms race, the strengthening of defensive capability was and remains for us job number one.

It is pleasant to note that in the past years of the five-year plan Soviet science has achieved new successes and has made new, important discoveries of a fundamental and applied nature. But I permit myself not to dwell on their characteristics specifically, for much has been said about this in our press.

The greatest matter is the creation of a large economic complex in Western Siberia. This zone is a genuine storehouse of minerals. There are oil, natural gas, and very valuable ores there. However, considerable capital investment is needed in order to bring it up and exploit it, especially as great distances separate the center from Western Siberia. Therefore, there has been little exploration of the deposits to get Siberian oil and natural gas, they have been little exploited, and it is necessary to lay gigantic pipelines to deliver the oil and natural gas to the European part of the country.

You know that American, Japanese, and West German firms are showing great interest in our oil and gas deposits, more specifically, getting our gas and oil. Many offers have been received from the capitalist countries, but for now they are all still in the exploratory stage.

In recent years in economic relations with the capitalist countries we have been concluding so-called compensation deals, that is, they provide the money and equipment, and we build the enterprises and start up the production, and [then] over a fixed period we pay off the credits and equipment granted with finished goods.

F. CASTRO Tell [me], is the price that is established for production constant? I am asking about this because Algeria, for example, has long-term agreements with the Americans about oil supplies. But right now, when the price for oil is rising it turns out that a stable price is becoming disadvantageous for Algeria.

L. I. BREZHNEV We know about this. Iraq, for example, asks us for almost \$90 for a ton of oil while we supply oil to the socialist countries at a price of 13-17 rubles a ton.

The question of prices is big and complex. And we still have the opportunity to discuss this.

We intend to build a new rail mainline in the East of the country. This is huge work and will require about six billion rubles, possibly even somewhat more. It will be necessary to build 57 bridges and seven tunnels, one of them 14 km long, in difficult conditions. The construction of this railroad will connect the new industrial centers arising in Siberia and the Far East, and include in the economy regions which previously remained relatively undeveloped.

We have allocated many billions of rubles for the five-year plan to improve the standard of living of the workers. This will allow an increase of wages and pensions, and increase the size of student stipends. We are already raising the minimum wage from 60 to 70 rubles. Other large social measures are also being successfully accomplished.

We are striving for a steady increase of the workers' standard of living and an extraordinarily great amount is being done in this regard. Housing construction is being done on an enormous scale. In Moscow alone 110-125,000 apartments are being built per year. We have sought for our prices for basic food products to remain stable for many years, although of course some price increases occur for many kinds of consumer goods where new materials are being used. Rent in the Soviet Union is perhaps the lowest in the world. The cost of natural gas which is used in daily life is 16 kopecks per person per month. Annually we allocate 12 billion rubles for a subsidy to keep the existing prices for meat.

We think that one cannot relax attention to questions connected with an increase of the workers' standard of living for a minute. Concern for the welfare of the people was and remains the most important sector of Party activity.

The situation in the economy is on the whole developing such that in 1974 we will work no worse than in 1973, and that the directives of the Congress for the five-year plan will be fulfilled.

The year has begun well. The workers greeted the appeal of the CPSU CC and the decisions of the December CC Plenum with great enthusiasm. Many letters came to the Politburo which expressed support for the Party line. Obligations are being taken everywhere which exceed the plan's tasks. The collectives of enterprises are developing so-called counter plans. All this demonstrates the unity of the Party and the people. One can definitely say that never before have our Party and people been so united, never before has the Party been so close and deep with the workers.

As I have already said, our plans are quite intensive. At times we feel a shortage of some materials, in particular metal, timber, and cement. The amount of work which is yet to be performed is simply colossal. Where will we count on drawing strength to implement everything planned, where will we find a point of support to further advance our cause, the cause of Communist development? These points of support are the Party and the people. And only them!

At the present time our Party numbers 15,025,000 members. This is a powerful force. One can expect that the strength of the Party will grow to 16 million by the 25th Congress. The Komsomol numbers about 33 million members right now. Figuratively speaking, together with the Party members, this is the guard of our Party.

In recent years we have done much work to improve the quality of the Party ranks. Before the 23rd Congress a situation had developed such that the percentage of the working class in the Party had declined. We analyzed the activity of the Khar'kov Party organization. Khar'kov is a large industrial center with developed machine building. Having studied the state of affairs in this Party organization we then examined the entire question in the CC. Certain oversights were revealed in the work with personnel, insufficient attention to attracting the working class into the Party was noted, and it was pointed out how it needed to be done. The CC decision was also conveyed to all Party rayon committees.

As a result of these measures representatives of the working class accepted in the Party rose to 52-57 percent, but this figure was still higher in industrial rayons.

It ought to be noted that many engineering and technical workers, who just yesterday were workers, are also Communists.

In a word, at the present time the working class is the backbone of the Party, and it is to them the leading role belongs.

Some time ago we began to make it easier for students to be accepted in the Party, especially students of evening higher educational establishments. This measure has fully justified itself. After graduating a higher educational establishment of fully mature people, Communists, come to a factory who are not only professionally trained but who also are also familiar with Party life and the practice of Party work.

Report and election conferences have been held in the country in recent months. One can definitely say that they were held in a very good atmosphere. There was a broad, businesslike, Party discussion about all Party and state matters. The comrades closely analyzed the state of affairs, and critically evaluated the results of the work. And, what is especially important, they supported the line pursued by the CC Politburo 100 percent.

A great many letters come to us in the CPSU CC. For example, during the work of the 24th Party Congress it happened that up to 25,000 letters a day came to the CC. These letters are a kind of mirror which reflects the depth of the Party's ties with the workers. And, of course, we cannot fail to be pleased that a teacher from Yakutsk, a tractor driver from Krasnoyarsk, and a sailor from a ship write that they completely share the domestic and foreign policy of the Party.

About two or three times a month the CC General Department compiles a survey of these letters and distributes it to the Politburo. I have already said and will say again that the overwhelming majority of the letters express support of Party decisions. There are, of course, such letters where workers express a particular request.

In a word, comrades, if one speaks in general terms, we can characterize the state of affairs in our country as good. The country is on a big upswing, the people are working with enthusiasm, and the Party's authority among the masses is high. Its leading role in society is constantly strengthening. All this creates in us confidence that those great tasks which we set at the 24th CPSU Congress can and should be fulfilled

F. CASTRO Cde. Brezhnev, we have already worked about two hours, and the rally is planned for five hours [P.M. assumed]. Maybe it is advisable to take a break right now and continue our conversations in coming days?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, evidently it will be correct to take a break right now. In coming days we can return to the questions of the domestic development of our country and discuss the international problems which undoubtedly deserve great attention.

2 February 1974

L. I. BREZHNEV Dear comrades! First of all I would like to say that our meetings with the Cuban workers have made an indelible impression on all of us. Of course, we have been in Cuba before and knew about the friendly feelings which the Cuban people feel for the Soviet people. However, nothing can replace direct impressions. In recent days we have had the opportunity to see with our own eyes how deep and genuinely fraternal relations exist between our Parties and countries. I want to stress that we value these relations and are fully determined to do everything necessary for them to develop in the future.

We have spoken several times with Cde. Fidel during these days and today we continue the discussions in an expanded format. I think that it will be correct if we listen to Cde. F. CASTRO.

F. CASTRO Dear Cde. Brezhnev! Dear Soviet and Cuban comrades! By virtue of the limitations of time I will speak comparatively briefly and talk only about the main factors which characterize the situation in our country.

If one speaks in general then at the present time we can assess our situation as good. Our Party and the Revolutionary Government have done great work in the area of Party and state development and devoted great attention to economic problems.

Our Party is comparatively young, and we are making great efforts to strengthen its ranks and make it as strong as possible.

What has been done? We have expanded the membership of the Party's CC

Secretariat, developed a number of instructions about Party work, created a CC working apparatus, and brought the best people into it.

Politburo and CC Secretariat meetings are held regularly. All important problems are considered in these meetings. The fact that a growth in the Party ranks is occurring and that the quality of the Party composition is good evokes satisfaction.

We have some difficulties about this figure. The Party contains the most active and conscientious fighters for our ideals and it is natural that it is Party members whom we promote to managerial work. They thereby become office workers from manual laborers. And this accordingly has influenced the share of the working class in the Party. But we have undertaken the necessary steps and the stratum of workers in the Communist Party of Cuba is increasing at the present time.

Our youth organizations, which are a good help to the Party, are strengthening.

We are doing considerable work right now to prepare a first congress which should be held in the middle of next year. Although we have no experience of holding Party congresses we will do everything for it to be a really good congress.

We recently held record and report conferences. Elections were held to governing bodies at all levels. This also might be viewed as an important part in the preparation of a congress. We have the right to say that the authority of the Party is growing. Its ties with the masses are constantly strengthening. And I especially want to stress that increasing attention is being paid to the ideological education of Communists.

We think that all our further development depends on strengthening Party organizations and increasing the discipline and fighting ability of the Party.

Considerable work has been done in the field of building the state. We have created an Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers which systematically discusses all aspects of state activity at its meetings, and also economic problems, whether associated with industry, agriculture, or construction. We are striving for all work to be done with great responsibility, with greater seriousness, and greater efficiency than before.

Public organizations have been strengthened along with the Party and state apparatus: trade unions, women's, revolutionary defense committees, peasant, and student. In the final account all these mass organizations operate under Party leadership, and the masses help it run them.

As I have already noted, we have devoted considerable attention to development of the economy. The plans for development of the economy are being successfully fulfilled. As you know, up to now our economic plans have been drawn up only for one year. The actual results seemed like this: in 1971 the growth of production was five percent, in 1972, approximately 10 percent, and in 1973 - 11.4 percent. In general, in the last three years the overall growth of industrial production was about 30 percent.

Of course, some sectors of industry are developing more rapidly, and others somewhat more slowly, but on the whole industry and construction are developing confidently.

Less growth has been achieved in agriculture. But here things are going better than before. In 1971 agriculture was hit by a drought. In 1972 the situation was more favorable. The state of affairs developed more favorably in 1973. Matters in agriculture are going very well in the current year. Every condition has been created for the [safry - the growing seasons] to increase.

Great work has been done in mechanizing agriculture. In the province of Camaguey, where the shortage of workers is being most acutely felt, the level of mechanization this year is about 40 percent. We have planned a nine percent growth in agriculture for 1974.

Of course, the high growth percentage says that we still have unused reserves. In the future the possibilities of such growth will evidently lessen. In some sectors our enterprises are already being used at full power.

On the other hand, our economy depends on the importation of many kinds of products, raw materials in particular. This creates certain limitations in its development.

We have begun to draw up an economic development plan for 1976-1980 at the present time. This plan provides for the growth of industrial production, a large

amount of construction, and also outlines a growth of agricultural production.

We would like to discuss our plan with the fraternal socialist countries, and then to conclude agreements with them for five years.

Our economy partly depends on trade with the capitalist world. And there are certain difficulties here: a shortage of some kinds of products in the capitalist market is being felt.

We are concerned that our plans be realistic plans, and we want to make our five-year plan realistic.

Evidently it's not worth talking in detail about some difficult aspects for our development right now. On the whole, they are known. In particular, there is the question of metal. Its shortage limits the possibilities of our growth. Obviously, some solution needs to be found to avoid stagnation.

We are devoting a great deal of attention to our plans and their fulfillment right now. Every three months we have examined here how the annual plan is being fulfilled on the whole. We have established control over the fulfillment of the decisions being adopted, carefully analyzed our mistakes in the economy, and are striving right now to use the most effective methods in socialist development. We are studying all our economic problems in a critical spirit and striving to do everything necessary for our economy to become as efficient as possible in the coming years.

Our foreign economic relations with the socialist countries are developing well, not to mention the Soviet Union. This relates to our ties with the GDR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary.

L. I. BREZHNEV But what economic relations are developing badly with us?

F. CASTRO We have always had very good relations with the Soviet Union, and now they have considerably improved with the other fraternal socialist countries.

Our influence in the non-aligned countries has recently increased. We are doing considerable work there, trying to give this movement a revolutionary, anti-imperialist character. Our relations with the Communist Parties of Europe and Latin America are developing and strengthening. Our activity in international organizations, in the UN and UNESCO, are expanding.

From our point of view relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union – I think that Cde. Brezhnev will agree with this – are very good relations. And we have no doubt that they will henceforth develop.

In the course of our conversations we could ascertain a complete unity of opinions on all the questions discussed. We are convinced that the collaboration of the Communist Party of Cuba with the CPSU will become ever deeper and all-encompassing. Soviet Communists can count on the Communist Party of Cuba and on its solidarity, in any situation and in all circumstances.

We are very glad that Cde. Brezhnev and the other Soviet comrades could be in our country, and feel that love and those fraternal feelings which the Cuban Communists and the Cuban workers feel toward the Party of Lenin and its leaders, and were able to assess the unity of our people and the strength of the Cuban revolution.

We think that the political and revolutionary conscience of our people will doom to failure any attempts by the reactionary forces of imperialism to make any ideological or political penetrations of our country.

During the 15 years of our Revolution the political unity of the people has consolidated, and its discipline and organized nature have risen; mass organizations have become stronger under the leadership of the Party. That is why we think that the positions of the Cuban Revolution are strong, and it is no accident that it is exerting a growing influence on the situation in all of Latin America. Our economic achievements and the practical results of the Revolution increase the attractive force of the Cuban example in Latin America. This gives us the right to look confidently at the future.

The Cuban people are filled with internationalist, patriotic sentiments. We are very glad that the Cuban people have been able to express a feeling of gratitude to the fraternal people of the Soviet Union and the CPSU during the days of the visit. We see that our people are not an ungrateful people, but people who are a friend who are able to respond to fraternal feelings from the Soviet Union with the same fraternal

sentiments, the same friendship. Relations between the Soviet and Cuban peoples and between our countries can be considered a model of internationalism, as an example of genuinely fraternal relations between peoples.

Never before in history has such a small country as ours, a relatively weak [one], which had to wage a very difficult struggle against a powerful enemy, received such effective and broad support as Cuba has received from the Soviet Union.

I want to say that the Soviet comrades will never regret that they have done so much for us. We will do everything necessary, everything that depends on us, for the friendship and solidarity with the Soviet Union to develop and strengthen from year to year in all fields. In the example of Cuba you have had and will always have a friend, a brother, and most of all, a brainchild of the October Revolution.

Such are our feelings toward the great Party of Lenin, toward the Soviet Union, toward the Country of the Soviets.

I want to again thank Cde. Brezhnev and all the Soviet comrades, for the visit to our country. This is a high honor for us, which all our people highly appreciate and will never forget.

We know of the enormous workload of Cde Brezhnev, and we know what great work he is doing to strengthen peace, and that he could share our country six days, fills our hearts with a feeling of endless gratitude.

The days of Cde. Brezhnev's visit to Cuba have become a holiday event for all Cubans in the full sense of the word. We are paying tribute to the enormous political importance of this visit. Our relations have become even stronger. The Cuban Revolution has acquired new evidence of constant support from the Soviet Union.

I would like to add to this that Cde. Brezhnev has evoked a feeling of great sympathy in our people from the very first moment he was on our land. Our people know the life's journey of Cde. Brezhnev, his constant friendly feelings toward Cuba, and the great international work which he is doing, his struggle for peace. But right now I want to say that direct contacts have passed on to additional sentiments, feelings of personal sympathy and love with respect to Cde. Brezhnev, and how we have been able to be convinced that they are expressed everywhere.

This pleases all of us very much. We think that Cde. Brezhnev will retain good memories of the days spent in Cuba.

Summarizing what was said, I want to again stress that we assess the visit as extraordinarily successful, which raises the relations between our Parties and peoples to a new height. This is all that I wanted to say.

Thank you.

L. I. BREZHNEV Dear Cde. Fidel! Dear Cde. Osvaldo Dorticos! Dear Cde. Raul Castro! Dear Cuban guests!

I would like to again thank all of you for those manifestations of friendship and fraternity with which our stay in Cuba have been noted. The closer the hour of parting approaches, the more you experience a feeling of regret that the visit is coming to an end.

Our contacts were good, as before. The fact that Fidel Castro, Osvaldo Dorticos, Raul Castro, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, Blas Roca, and other Cuban comrades have been in the Soviet Union more than once has helped strengthen our friendship and allowed you to be convinced that the people of Lenin are faithful to his precepts, that our Party and Central Committee are sacredly fulfilling their internationalist duty to world socialism, the national liberation movement, and the forces of social progress.

Our visit has allowed [us] to wholeheartedly feel the loyalty of Cuba and Cuban Communists to the high principles of socialist internationalism. We have formed the firm conviction that the visit and its results have enormous importance. One can assert with all certainty that the results of the visit go far beyond the bounds of Soviet-Cuban relations in their importance.

I have had an opportunity to look over the reactions of the world press to our meeting. Basically, all the comments come down to this visit having historic importance and undoubtedly will serve to strengthen everything good that the Cuban Revolution has achieved. This unquestionably pleases us.

The warm reception given to us by millions of Cubans speaks not only of the sentiments which the Cuban people feel toward the Soviet people. They also tell of the great work which the Communist Party of Cuba has done to overcome certain difficulties, the serious achievements which it has achieved in socialist development, and the deserved authority which it enjoys among Cuban workers.

The authority of the Party among the masses and its ability to lead the masses are a great achievement of the Cuban Communists, a great service of Cde. Fidel Castro and his compatriots. I had occasion to speak of this as one of the most important and striking impressions from the visit.

We all know what enormous importance Marx, Engels, and Lenin attached to the role of the Party in a revolution, we remember how on the eve of the October Revolution, Lenin, when replying to an assertion of one of the Menshevik leaders who declared that in Russia there was no party capable of taking power, said "There is such a Party!". This was the Party of the Bolsheviks.

Our visit to Cuba allows [me] to say that in Cuba there is such a Party which is capable to inspiring the people to socialist development, organizing it, and leading it. This is the Communist Party of Cuba.

The high authority of the Cuban Communists among the workers pleases us as your friends and compatriots. This is a definite guarantee of future successes in the development of socialism in your wonderful land.

You are heading toward your first Party congress and, of course, you are heading in with completely different conditions than those in which we held our first Party congress. We have no doubt that your congress will have historical importance. It will determine the path which the Cuban people will follow to their bright future for many years ahead.

I would like to again in the name of the Soviet Communists to wish your congress success and express a firm confidence that it will bring new victories to the Cuban Revolution and new victories to socialist Cuba.

It was pleasant for me and my comrades to see the enthusiasm of the Cuban people. We are all deeply touched by that cordiality with which our meeting were noted. Of course, all of us are lively people, we are all quite emotional, and such a cordial reception could not fail to touch us to the depth of our souls.

But I would like to direct attention to the fact that at this reception something more than the warmth of the feelings of the Cuban people toward the Soviet people was exhibited. I can say with complete conviction that one of the main impressions was just that the Cuban people have perceived the socialist ideology, that they are following the Party, and that the Party and the people are united. But this is also the support which will help you put everything planned into practice.

Third. We have never had a shadow of a doubt that the Communist Party of Cuba is a Marxist-Leninist, internationalist Party, that it is no accident that it has won such love and authority in the international Communist and worker's movement. Far from every Communist party could have won such broad recognition in the popular masses of its own country and in the international arena in such a short time. This is the merit of your Central Committee, the merit of Fidel Castro. This is also one of those conclusions which we are drawing as a result of our brief visit to Cuba.

Here Cde. Fidel has said that the Cuban Communists are reliable friends of our Party and our people in the fight for the ideals of socialism and Communism. We have had no doubts on this account. Our friendship has especially strengthened in recent years. Broad, stable ties are maintained between us in all the most important areas.

Dear Cde. Fidel, speaking in the name of the Central Committee of our Party, the 15 million Soviet Communists, and 250 million Soviet people, I want to assure you that the Soviet Union will always be a reliable friend of socialist Cuba.

Our friendship has been proven by practice, which says endlessly more than the best words themselves. It has been proven by our joint actions in the fight against imperialism, in support of the national liberation struggle of peoples, by that unity of action between our Parties which increases from year to year.

I want to stress that our common path has not been easy. We have known successes in this path, and we have know difficulties. But, using the words of V. I. Lenin, we

Communists, holding hands tightly have been able to advance our Communist cause with joint efforts.

It is an indisputable fact that we gain strength in unity itself. Our Party is far from pushing you to aggravate relations with the current Chinese leadership. We see everything, that the Chinese leaders have broken with Marxism-Leninism, and have thrown out the principle of proletarian internationalism. But they have found themselves completely bankrupt in attempts to split the socialist commonwealth and undermine the unity of the Communist movement. Our unity and the fighting alliance of the countries of socialism have ended up immeasurably stronger than the divisive ideology and practice of the Maoists.

We have no doubt that the visit which has taken place, the entire atmosphere in which it was spent, our speeches at the rally in Havana and before the students of the Lenin School have demonstrated sufficiently clearly to the entire world our unchanging fidelity to the friendship, our common principles, and our common ideology. I have no doubt that the results of the visit will raise the authority of both Cuba and the Soviet Union in the world Communist movement as well as among progressive humanity on the whole.

As regards economic relations then perhaps neither we nor you are able to anticipate all the details and all the specific aspect which might arise in the relations developing between the Soviet Union and Cuba. What has already been done and planned allows [us] to say with complete confidence that our relations are built on a firm long-term basis and it is without doubt that the businesslike cooperation between our countries will become ever deeper and substantial from year to year.

Those multi-hour conversations which we have had with Cde. Fidel and the meetings of the other Soviet comrades with Cuban leaders free me of the need to speak of a particular aspect in the development of Soviet-Cuban cooperation.

Some words about international affairs.

When preparations were being made for the trip and in particular a speech at the rally was being prepared, I tried to make it balanced. Of course, we know that the nature of imperialism remains unchanged, and we take this into account. We know about the actions of the reactionaries in Latin America, in Asia, in Africa, and in Europe; we know about the difficulties we are facing in the struggle for the interests of peace and socialism. We speak, and we speak openly, about all this as Communists.

At the same time we consider it tactically justified to maintain a certain restraint, to emphasize attention on the main thing which determines the development of international life today. But this main thing is in the successes of world socialism, in the practical steps to strengthen peace, in the invincibility of that historical cause with which our Parties and the other fraternal Parties of the socialist countries are occupied.

The correlation of forces in the world continues to change in favor of socialism. Under our influence and thanks to our common joint foreign policy we have achieved considerable changes in the international situation. Today the United States of America is no longer what it was 10-15 years ago and their influence is on the wane. Significant changes are occurring in Europe. Conditions are gradually maturing so that a situation of a durable peace and security is created on this continent. We have many good friends there in Europe. These are not only the fraternal socialist countries, but also the French Communist Party, the Italian Communist Party, and a number of other influential Communist Parties of the European capitalist countries.

In Asia, our friendship with a great country, India, is strengthening. Cooperation with many other Asian countries is developing successfully.

The Arab world is with us. And we will never allow anyone to drive a wedge into our relations with the Arab peoples.

The power and influence of the socialist countries, our direct and indirect allies are such right now that the imperialist world is forced to reckon with us in all seriousness. We spoke with Cde. Fidel about all this in detail.

We have come to you with a good mood and are leaving, convinced of the strength and inviolability of Soviet-Cuban friendship. I can assure you that these feelings are

shared by all Soviet people. During these days I and my comrades have had the opportunity to talk with Moscow, Ukraine, and Leningrad. All Soviet people are living in the visit to Cuba in these days and exhibiting enormous interest in our meetings and our discussions, and entirely approve of strengthening of our fraternal relations. We and you have prepared an important political document in which those ideas and thoughts have been accumulated concerning we have spoken in the course of our conversations and discussions. We have no doubt that all the fraternal Parties will assess the Soviet-Cuban declaration and its importance for what it is worth.

As I have already said, the week spent in Cuba flew by imperceptibly, as if it was a single day. Our meetings with you, comrades, made a very deep impression on all of us. Our conversations with Fidel were infinitely frank. I think that we mutually value this. Such frankness is no accident, it is possible only between true friends.

Dear comrades, I would like to again cordially thank you, the Communist Party of Cuba and the Revolutionary government, for the high award, the Order of Jose Marti, and in the act of the award which I see recognition of the services of our Party and people in everything which has been done in support to the Cuban Revolution, in strengthening Soviet-Cuban friendship.

We have recorded in the communiqué an invitation to Fidel Castro, Osvaldo Dorticos, and Raul Castro to visit the Soviet Union at a time convenient for them. I would like to speak about this invitation again today and stress that we are sincerely glad for your visit to the Soviet Union.

Dear comrades, let the friendship between the CPSU and the Communist Party of Cuba, between the Cuban and Soviet peoples, strengthen and develop! Let the friendly family of socialist countries become stronger!

Thank you very much, dear comrades.

Record of a personal conversation

between Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV and Cde. F. CASTRO

2 February 1974

L. I. BREZHNEV. I read the text of the Declaration again. I think that it is a very good document which needs neither additions nor changes. It is directed at a further strengthening of our friendship and fraternal cooperation.

We are confident that our people will receive the Declaration well. All our friends will rejoice at this document. World public opinion will also receive it well. It will be clear to everyone that the visit served the strengthening of our fraternal relations.

It is good that you divided the concluding document into two parts, thereby raising the significance and importance of the Declaration.

F. CASTRO Yes. As a result of this the protocol details are not [mixed] in with the fundamental principles.

L. I. BREZHNEV As regards our trade relations the trade protocol for 1974 has already been signed.

F. CASTRO Yes, I know.

L. I. BREZHNEV We have already appropriate decisions regarding the military questions. Although not all your requests were met, the amount allocated is great. The details will be communicated to Raul or other comrades whom you send to Moscow for the signing of the agreement.

I have already told you that we are providing for the delivery of the T-62 tanks, even more modern ones than the T-55 tank. We will take steps for you to have a whole regiment of new machines. The T-62 tanks are a strong, good machine.

As regards aircraft, then we are offering to select a group of [your] best pilots who have already mastered modern equipment, send them to the Soviet Union, and teach them to pilot the MIG-23. Then they will return to Cuba, possibly with the first squadron of these machines, and then evidently regular delivery of the MIG-23's might begin.

F. CASTRO Our army needs to have the most modern weapons. It not only defends

socialism, but also serves as a channel of a certain influence on the military circles of the Latin American countries. I think that the military will still play an important role in these countries. And one of the means of political influence on them is the quality of our military equipment. In a word, it is also necessary to bear in mind the political importance of Soviet military equipment in Cuba.

L. I. BREZHNEV Based on what I said above, the timeframes for the arrival of the MIG-23 aircraft in Cuba will have to be clarified later. When an appropriate base has been created we will obviously send some trainer aircraft to create a training center on site here for future pilots.

F. CASTRO Do the Syrians and Egyptians have the MIG-23?

L. I. BREZHNEV Just on the eve of [our] departure for Havana we informed Asad of our intention to send the first batch of MIG-23 aircraft to Syria. Nevertheless, they will have to wait an entire year until the pilots are trained to handle these aircraft. These machines are of a very high class.

F. CASTRO But will the Egyptians have such an aircraft?

L. I. BREZHNEV No. At least at the present time. I promised Sadat to give such an aircraft, but this is only possible in the future. We have decided to refrain for now.

F. CASTRO In my view the Egyptians are not worthy of great trust.

L. I. BREZHNEV Sadat turned to us [with a request] that we make up the lost weapons to him. He did it in such a form as if we were guilty that he had lost our tanks.

F. CASTRO To this it needs to be added that they have made a great political mistake. They needed to seek a political settlement before the moment they lost the military initiative and part of their territory.

L. I. BREZHNEV We tried to restrain Sadat all the time, however he did not listen to us. We suggested that we come to agreement with the Americans for all questions to be in one package, both a withdrawal of troops and questions of a final settlement. Let the settlement go in stages, but all stages should be interconnected. But what did he do? You know the terms: the line of separation, which UN troops control, passes several kilometers from the Canal, but the main thing is that all the important passes in the Sinai remain in the hands of the Israelis. Sadat tied himself with a commitment not to use the military, paramilitary, and other measures of this nature.

F. CASTRO It is interesting, how does he think that Sinai will now be returned?

L. I. BREZHNEV I don't know. I recently wrote him a letter. In addition, I had a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Fahmi. I asked him, "What will we do further?" In reply he began to tell me a long story that, he said, he had a commission from President Sadat to ask us for new weapons, etc. I said to him, why did you come, for we have a Treaty and we have observed it honestly. During the battles we set up an airlift via which we delivered tanks, field guns, and other equipment. Weapons [worth] 500-600 million rubles were delivered. So everything is clear on this question. But what is there to do with a political settlement? Are you playing some game with Kissinger, and what about the conference in Geneva? It's like they're playing some dirty game.

F. CASTRO Yes they're not playing honestly. Did the Egyptians not warn you when they began combat operations?

L. I. BREZHNEV They notified us in just 24 hours.

F. CASTRO Who notified you, the Egyptians or the Syrians?

L. I. BREZHNEV The Syrians informed us first, declaring that they had an agreement with the Egyptians about beginning joint combat operations. Then the information also came from Egypt. They decided the question of the start of combat operations independently.

The main mistake of the Egyptians was that they removed our military advisers. They did not understand the full importance of this step. When I was in Washington Nixon asked me, and when Tito was in America Nixon also asked him: when will the Russians take away their military people out of Egypt? This was a strong trump card in our hands. We could answer: ensure a settlement, and we will take our advisors out. But Sadat acted otherwise.

F. CASTRO He did not understand any of this.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, of course, this was a big mistake. Our military people left, and

the Americans and Israelis only celebrated.

F. CASTRO I think that possibly they even arranged with the Americans about this in advance.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, it is entirely possible. Probably they promised them something for the withdrawal of our troops.

F. CASTRO The Egyptians thereby considerably weakened themselves.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, they unquestionably became much weaker.

F. CASTRO In my view, Sadat is not a serious person, it is very difficult to deal with him. In my opinion, Asad is considerably different from him. This is a serious person, he has firm political positions. I met with him at a conference in Algiers, and he made an impression on me of a serious person who takes principled positions.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, you're right. I have met with each of them several times, and have to say that Asad differs from Sadat in many respects. By the way, he sent us a telegram here with a proposal about a meeting in Moscow in February. We haven't yet responded.

The problem is that Pompidou is also asking us for a meeting in February, but we are in no hurry to answer him. When I was in Washington Pompidou asked me to come to Paris on the way home, and he for his part promised to go to Moscow after a visit to China. As you know, I fulfilled my promise, and after Washington I went to Paris. After the visit to China he did not consider it necessary to make a stop in Moscow. Now I was to remind him of this. This is a dirty game on his part.

F. CASTRO Yes, it's dishonest.

L. I. BREZHNEV I don't like such politics. A leader should be an honest person and be able to keep his word.

F. CASTRO During the combat operations in the Near East the Syrians turned to us with a request to send them our pilots. We discussed this question in the Politburo in detail, analyzed it from all sides, and reported to the Syrians that, unfortunately, we could not grant their request since we do not have enough pilots ourselves. However, we did not want to give only a negative reply, and therefore offered to send them our tank men and artillerists. The Syrians agreed and we sent several hundred of our tank men and artillerists together with officers, a total of about a regiment. When we did this we calculated that our units would be able to exert a useful influence there by their example, their high discipline, and their moral character. But we set a firm condition: our units will spend about a year there, and after a year we would return them home without fail. They are there at the present time.

L. I. BREZHNEV Both the Egyptian and Syrian armies master modern combat equipment very poorly. Take pilots, for example. They have pilots who can scramble an aircraft, fly on it, and land. To wage aerial combat is a completely different matter, they are not always capable of this. We could, of course, send our people there, but a difficulty arises here: aircraft are controlled from the ground, all commands are given by radio, and our enemies would immediately know about the participation of Soviet troops there. It's the same thing with tanks: commands in battle are transmitted by radio, and they can easily be intercepted. I think that the Cuban comrades would obviously encounter these difficulties.

F. CASTRO Yes, but when this is done there is all the same a great distinction between the use of Cuban and Soviet troops. I mean the possible international consequences of this.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, you're right.

F. CASTRO The problem is that we didn't want to give them a negative answer and decided to send our troops.

L. I. BREZHNEV So, we are supplying them combat equipment, but unfortunately they do not always satisfactorily master it. This also concerns anti-aircraft missiles. When retreating they were even unable to blow up our installations.

F. CASTRO The Egyptians?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, the Egyptians. An installation fell into the hands of the Israelis, and they right away sent it to America.

F. CASTRO Well, this is simply an outrage.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, we were very upset, but what is there to do? After this we did not leave our installations in the hands of only Egyptian personnel.

F. CASTRO Soviet personnel did not service these installations?

L. I. BREZHNEV No, they did not service [them]. By that time we had trained the Egyptians and, at their insistent request, we handed over these installations to them. But it is one thing to teach [someone] how to control [something] in training sessions and another, to use the installations in battle. Here they often displayed cowardice and ended up incapable of doing what they were taught.

What happened in Syria? The Syrians decided to attack the positions of the Israelis in the Golan Heights and sent two tank divisions there; however, they did not recognize one another and killed off half of their personnel. The enemy managed to use this incident and increased their pressure on the Syrian troops. The Israelis approached to within 30 km of Damascus. Then we had to quickly come to an agreement with the Americans so they would put pressure on the Israelis, and a cease-fire agreement was concluded.

A similar case also occurred on the Egyptian front. When the Egyptians crossed the Suez Canal, Sadat was very glad, he drank a glass of cognac and excitedly shouted: "We will show them, what it means to have Soviet weapons in our hands! We will show the entire world how Egyptians fight!"

But then the Israeli army crosses to the western bank of the Suez Canal. We pointed out the danger ensuing from this; however in ecstasy from the victories he brushed off this warning: this, he said, is not important, these are small units. But Suez ended up cut off. The strongest Egyptian army, the Third, was actually surrounded. We had to again use pressure for even drinking water to get through to the Egyptian soldiers.

What did this war show? First, it confirmed what we constantly told the Americans: the situation in the Near East is explosive, here a war could break out at any moment, the Arabs are not at all those who had suffered defeat in the '70s. Second, the myth that it was impossible to defeat the Israeli army was dispelled. Israel suffered great losses. Even according to Israeli information they had tens of thousands wounded, many killed and taken prisoner, and much equipment was lost. As a result a new stage came: although inconsiderable, but nevertheless a part, of the territory on the Suez Canal passed into the hands of the Egyptians. A decision in principle was reached about a settlement of the conflict. The Geneva Conference began its work.

Right now Gromyko is going to America and will pressure the Americans for a regular meeting of the Geneva Conference to be held. When in Moscow Fahmi pressed me in Sadat's name that a regular meeting needed to be held. It is true that he did this under pressure. We constantly asked him: what should our next steps at the Geneva Conference be, what questions should be discussed there? He didn't give us any specific answer, but promised that Sadat would think everything over and send us a reply.

Possibly his reply has already arrived in Moscow. In any event, Fahmi asked for several days for Sadat to be able to think it over.

I received a letter from Asad in reply to my message in which I recommended that he also take part in the Conference. In such an event there would be three participants from our side - us, Egypt, and Syria - and two from their side - Israel and the United States.

F. CASTRO Will Syria take part in a conference?

L. I. BREZHNEV In his letter Asad answered me that two days before this at a meeting of the Party leadership they made a decision not to take part in the Conference. Now, having familiarized himself with my letter, they decided that evidently after some time Syria will take part in the Conference. In the same letter Asad informed [me] of a desire to come to Moscow in February. We agreed in principle, however the exact date of the visit has not yet been agreed.

On the whole [I] ought to say that without our aid, without our policy, a settlement in the Near East it would not have been possible. Now the Israelis also understand that some compromise solution ought to be sought.

F. CASTRO How are your relations with Iraq developing?

L. I. BREZHNEV We have very good relations. Iraq, it is true, takes an intransigent

position with respect to signed agreements.

Gaddafi introduces very big confusion in all these matters. First he was with Egypt, Egypt needed him to get money, then now he is trying to conclude a union with Tunisia. I think that this strange union could be called an alliance of a bear with a hedgehog.

F. CASTRO I would call this union an alliance of a crazy man with a swindler.

L. I. BREZHNEV It seems that Bourguiba has already rejected this union.

F. CASTRO In political terms Bourguiba is a big reactionary.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, we know this.

F. CASTRO In addition, he is a very slick individual [*bol'shoy lovkach*] and con man [*kombinator*]. As regards Gaddafi, this is simply an abnormal person. I observed him in Algiers and was firmly convinced of this.

L. I. BREZHNEV I have never seen Gaddafi. But his representative came to us, also quite a young man, very bellicose. He met with Cdes. Kosygin and Podgornyy. At these meetings he explained to our comrades in great detail that they, the Libyans, are genuine revolutionaries, but we, he said, are not. He insisted a great deal on meeting with me. I received him. Right away he began to explain to me that they are genuine revolutionaries, that they have nationalized some company, that they plan to build a new society, etc. And all this in such an instructive tone, that we should almost learn from them. Then I decided to teach him a small lesson. I explained to him in detail how we understand the events which have transpired. I read him a whole lecture. Of course, I don't want to exaggerate the importance of this fact, but when leaving he warmly thanked me, excitedly saying that this was the happiest day in his life, that now he understood the real importance of the policy of the Soviet Union and that role which it plays, and that he would report about all this to the Libyan leadership.

In my opinion, Gaddafi is a kid. It was very easy for him to gain victory, practically without a sharp struggle. It is understandable that they have no idea either about Lenin or socialism. What they do have is a lot of money. They have a population of about two million, a lot of oil, and several billion dollars in various banks. And with all this Gaddafi is a Muslim fanatic.

F. CASTRO I am not very sure that this is a Muslim fanatic. In my opinion, these are simply rude, uneducated and, he said, ill-intentioned people.

L. I. BREZHNEV Possibly. In a conversation with Sadat I asked him: what should we do with Gaddafi, he asks us for weapons, but at the same time he curses the USSR and anathematizes Soviet power? Sadat replied to me: "This is simply a kid. [You] need to have patience".

There has not been and is no unity in the Arab world.

F. CASTRO I exhibited a great deal of patience with Gaddafi at the conference in Algiers. I wanted to take a closer look at him to find out what kind of person he was. I finally even developed an intention to meet and talk with him personally. Possibly, I thought, he has some good intentions, maybe he is simply under a delusion. Unfortunately, he left Algiers very quickly and our meeting did not take place. However, on the whole this is my impression of him: this is simply an abnormal person or at least semi-normal.

L. I. BREZHNEV The Deputy Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq is planning to come to us at the end of February or beginning of March.

F. CASTRO Hussein?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, Hussein.

F. CASTRO I know him. And it seems to me this is a serious person.

L. I. BREZHNEV I also know him. He was at a reception at my [office], and I talked with him for several hours. In my opinion, this is a promising person.

F. CASTRO And, in addition, he is a real revolutionary.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, he looks at things more sensibly and better imagines the prospect of a new society.

The comrades from South Yemen make a very pleasant impression on us. We gave them squadrons of our aircraft, obsolete it is true, free, but they can use them to train pilots and to surveil their own territory.

F. CASTRO Yes, the people from South Yemen make a wonderful impression.

L. I. BREZHNEV They are still very young, but militant and revolutionary.

F. CASTRO In addition, their views are based on the principles of Marxism. They speak about scientific socialism, and talk about this seriously. And, in addition, they are modest people. I don't know if they will find oil in their country. Maybe, but they haven't yet done real prospecting there. For now, it's a poor country. But perhaps they will find oil. Obviously [they] need to search as they ought.

L. I. BREZHNEV Oil matters are complex. We should prospect for oil at home, we are searching for oil in India, and we are searching in a number of Arab countries at their request. And specialists and good equipment are needed for all this.

On the whole it seems to me that a solution to the Near East problem will obviously take still more time. If we were able to solve this in 1974 it would be remarkable.

F. CASTRO To solve this problem in what sense?

L. I. BREZHNEV I mean a complete solution of the problem. Such a decision is possible, of course, in the event that Sadat does not sell out and does not decide to preserve the current situation forever. But I don't know what the reaction of the other Arab countries will be in such an event.

F. CASTRO In my opinion, judging from his character, Sadat will now do everything possible to achieve the fulfillment of the first agreement, and will then begin to exert pressure to achieve subsequent agreements.

L. I. BREZHNEV Inasmuch he is in contact with us right now, he avoids the solution of political questions all the time and prefers to hold negotiations only about weapons; maybe you're right.

F. CASTRO That's his style. It is a strange style, the style of an opportunist. But how did Boumediene behave in the USSR?

L. I. BREZHNEV I met with him several times. I remember he came to us with Aref right after the Arabs' defeat in 1967. They demanded our intervention in the development of events, entry into the war.

F. CASTRO They insisted on this?

L. I. BREZHNEV Categorically.

F. CASTRO Boumediene?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, Boumediene.

F. CASTRO And he came to the Soviet Union for this?

L. I. BREZHNEV Exactly for this.

F. CASTRO For the Soviet Union to enter the war?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, that is exactly what he demanded. He insisted that the Soviet Union immediately enter the war and immediately transfer weapons to the Arab armies. Then we replied to them: first, it is impossible to deliver so many weapons in one year, and second, an army which threw away all its equipment, all its weapons, everything down to [its] boots in seven days cannot be combat-ready in three months. And in three months it will not be able to master the most modern military equipment. We said all this to them, but they were offended. Boumediene declared that they were leaving Moscow right away. I asked him to remain for one more day, and we met again in the morning. I explained our position to him and suggested [he] act calmly without haste and deliberately. We suggested gradually supplying the Arab armies with new equipment, giving military advisers in order for the training of personnel be on-site, and at the same time as the equipment which these personnel could operate came. Thus, we would gradually be able to train an army for it to be capable of waging an offensive. But if you begin a war tomorrow then the day after Cairo will fall, Damascus will fall, and the progressive regimes in the Arab countries will be overthrown.

After my explanations Boumediene calmed down somewhat, however he did not agree with us. I asked him, "But what troops can you send?" He replied, "A regiment

of Soviet aircraft if you give us Soviet pilots". And he left after this.

Now, when Sadat struck the Israeli forces on 6 October 1973, Boumediene unexpectedly turned to us with a request for an urgent meeting. He arrived with such a proposal: supply the Egyptians with weapons, and I will pay for them. And the same with Syria. When he said this he named a quantity of tanks for Egypt and Syria that we should supply for this money.

I asked him, "But what about a political settlement? For [Israeli] troops are standing before Damascus". Do you imagine how he answered me? "It's not my business. I won't get involved in this. If they want to defend themselves, let them defend themselves". I said to him, "Listen, Boumediene, I don't understand you. What kind of position is this?" And he replied, "But what can I do? They want to defend Damascus, let them defend [it]".

Boumediene asserted that he had come to fulfill his duty, to arrange with us about deliveries of weapons, for which he would pay. I told him, "We are supplying weapons without you". We have begun to deliver weapons without any official agreement. We have not yet been paid a kopeck. That is all that I want to say to you about Boumediene. He spent one day with us and left for Syria, and then for Egypt. The truth is, it needs to be said that this time he behaved better than in the first visit.

F. CASTRO As a matter of fact, did not Gaddafi suggest the same thing?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, practically the same thing. But we are not pushing Boumediene away from us. Not long ago our delegation was there and trade ties are growing. He asked us to sell him tanks and aircraft. It seems an agreement about this has already been signed. Such is his behavior. It is somewhat strange in our view. Right now, when Sadat has concluded an agreement about posting [razvod] troops Boumediene has recalled his contingents and aircraft. It is hard for us to understand what is happening in the Arab world.

We have repeatedly told the Arabs: get together and work out a common position so that we have clarity how to give you aid. On 6 October Sadat began combat operations against Israel. Three days later I received a telegram from Asad, "Please come to agreement with America about a cease-fire". We sent a telegram to Cairo: "What should we do? Asad is asking for our intervention for a cease-fire". Sadat replied, "I'll talk to Asad". A day later Sadat reported that he had talked with Asad and [Asad] had said he was withdrawing his request. Two days passed and Asad again turned to us: "I earnestly request your intervention to achieve a cease-fire agreement". We again turned to Cairo. Sadat replied: "It's nothing, it's not important, I will discuss [it] with him right now". But we sit and worry and endure.

Later at Sadat's and Asad's request we nevertheless pressured the Americans and came to agreement about making a joint proposal to the UN about a cease-fire. Britain and France wanted to worm themselves into this proposal. There was also a lot of correspondence about this proposal. We finally managed to achieve the situation which exists to this day.

Gromyko is going to the United States right now and one of the questions he will discuss there will be the Near East. Our task is to bring the matter of a Near East settlement to a conclusion. An assessment of the Near East situation was given in our speech in Havana. My words differ from what Sadat is doing.

In essence Sadat was content with the agreement about separation of forces. But I said this is only a first step, after which new steps should immediately follow for an absolute and final settlement of the situation. This was done to help Sadat correct the mistake which the Israelis understood, that the matter was not finished with this, and for the Americans to clearly know about our position. The same has been recorded in our joint Declaration. This is our line on this question.

Last evening I read a report about a session of the American Congress at which Nixon presented his message "Concerning the Situation in the Country". Judging from this report Nixon felt himself somewhat more assured before Congress and applause was heard many times. He said that the US should cooperate with the Soviet Union, that the Soviet Union needs to be offered most favored nation treatment. If we want to fight for peace, he said, then we should do this together with the Soviet Union. Those were the elements in his speech yesterday.

On the other hand Nixon's speech also had this aspect: we, he said, should also be

concerned about our own security, and the United States should not be militarily weaker than other countries. They accuse Nixon of making an agreement with us in 1972 which, as his opponents assert, weakened the United States and gave a unilateral military advantage to the Soviet Union. Therefore Nixon was forced just now to sort of justify himself before Congress. So we still have much to do in relations with America.

We will pressure Nixon in this direction so that the United States plays its part in a conference on questions of European security. It is necessary to look at things realistically and understand that the United States might substantively influence the position of such countries as France, Britain, Italy, and the FRG.

I think that you, Fidel, understand that if we manage to bring the matter of European security to a conclusion then this will have enormous international significance. It's not just a matter of an appropriate document being signed. We will show world public opinion, the international working class, and political parties new possibilities. Some incorrectly understand peaceful coexistence, presuming that it means concessions in the area of ideology. Not at all. The main things for us in the agenda of European security are such questions as the inviolability of borders, the non-use of force or the threat of force, and respect for the sovereignty and independence of all countries. But our enemies are trying to throw in questions of "cultural [*dukhovnyy*] exchange" as main points. They are thereby trying to throw a monkey wrench into the works.

F. CASTRO Do they want to include these questions in the work of the conference?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, exactly so. They want to put such questions as the free exchange of ideas and information, the freedom of dissemination of radio broadcasts, the exchange of literature, immigration, etc. in the center of the discussion.

I gave them an answer at the congress of trade unions, saying: we are also for a broad exchange in the area of culture and information, but with respect for the rights, laws, and customs of each country. Having come to the Soviet Union, please behave in accordance with Soviet laws and do not engage in anti-Soviet propaganda. If you begin to do this, then according to Soviet laws you will land in prison; if you engage in hard-currency operations we will also put you in prison. In the event you respect our laws then please come and familiarize yourself with our life.

F. CASTRO But what country was the initiator in posing questions of an ideological nature?

L. I. BREZHNEV France and the FRG. The Americans also had a hand in it. It seems to us that they cooked this up within the framework of NATO, although officially the negotiations in Geneva are being conducted not on a bloc basis; over 30 countries are taking part on an equal basis. These are not bloc versus bloc negotiations. But just like ourselves, the socialist countries, they also consult among themselves. We submitted an agenda for the conference. It is the well-known Declaration which we adopted in Prague. It has become the basis of the documents discussed in Helsinki and are now being discussed in Geneva.

F. CASTRO Do you hope that you will be able to achieve results in 1974?

L. I. BREZHNEV It is quite hard to predict a precise date, but of course we want for an end to be put to this question this year. It would be yet one more victory of ours which would give us the opportunity to deal with other important matters. Such is the situation in Europe in general terms.

I have already told you that Brandt is asking to come to us. In addition, I think that [I] will have to meet with Pompidou all the same. This is a person who, like a young woman, loves to be wooed. This time I am thinking of doing some serious "wooing". We intend to have a hard talk with him because on a number of questions he takes a quite poor position, although of course he does not openly say this.

F. CASTRO It seems to me this is because France has lost its role to a considerable degree. It now occupies a secondary place.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, perhaps. And in addition the absence of de Gaulle is notable. De Gaulle was, of course, a strong personality. He strived to raise France's role in Europe and in the world. Pompidou also wants to be a de Gaulle, but he doesn't have the information.

The French are very afraid of the FRG becoming closer to us than to France. We are

playing on this. In politics such situations need to be used.

F. CASTRO Has the question been studied in the Soviet Union of what influence the current energy crisis, more precisely, the increase of the price of oil, might exert on the financial situation of Europe?

L. I. BREZHNEV We have created a special Commission of the Politburo which includes Cdes. Kosygin, Baybakov, and representatives of the State Security Committee and other of our organizations. The Commission is to prepare our position on the question of oil.

This is a quite serious matter. For example, we are selling the socialist countries oil at 13, 14 and sometimes up to 17 rubles per ton. Iraq is now demanding \$90 a ton from us. We would not like to make any decision without a deep analysis. We expect the same from other socialist countries.

The Soviet Union plays an important role in providing the socialist countries with oil and natural gas. By 1980 our supplies of oil to the socialist countries will exceed 90 million tons. Prices on the world market have risen right now to \$90 per ton. We sell [it] at 13-17 rubles [per ton]. It is understood that it is necessary to seek some solution. We aren't panicking, we are patient. We want to make a well-thought-out, responsible decision.

[one or two words illegible] that the socialist countries will not be able to withstand [one word illegible] \$90, that is, about 75 rubles per ton. They [do not] have the hard currency reserves for this. [We] ought to deeply [study] all this. We created our Commission for this.

We asked a second Commission to look more deeply into the question of China. From time to time we have studied this problem in detail. Now a special meeting of the Politburo will be devoted to it.

F. CASTRO Before we switch to the question of China I would like to clarify the following. Do you not think that the combination of a serious financial crisis with great social and political problems creates the preconditions for the appearance of a new economic crisis in Western Europe?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes. It seems to me that the possibility of the appearance of a new economic crisis cannot be excluded. The so-called "Common Market" has again put off the adoption of common principles by two or more years. I have repeatedly directed Pompidou's attention to the position of the "Common Market" countries. Mr. Pompidou, I said to him, you talk all the time about your desire for France to have a privileged position with the Soviet Union in the area of economics. We agree with this, but how is to be for us: we can build relations with France on a bilateral basis or should [we] go to Belgium to the "Common Market" for their approval? We will not go to Belgium for approval of questions of Soviet-French relations. He answered me: France is interested in relations on a bilateral basis.

I told this to Pompidou more than once. I don't know how they will look into it there in their "Common Market". Honestly speaking, it is difficult for me to believe that they, capitalists and imperialists, will be able to get the profits of nine different countries distributed equally. All these countries have different levels of economic development. France is striving to occupy a privileged position. But economically the FRG has great influence. France fears the FRG most of all.

F. CASTRO Right now they are in a situation of an energy crisis, acting on the principle "each for himself".

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, that is exactly so.

And we have created one more, a third, Commission, on Latin America. The CC staff, the MFA and the KGB are to report their views about the state of affairs in Latin America to the Politburo.

A fourth Commission should deal with the consideration of questions connected with the realization of the guidelines of the Plenum of our CC, which are directed at an improvement of the management of industry and agriculture, and the achievement of a considerable increase of the efficiency of our economy.

Such are the four big problems to which special meetings of the Politburo are to be devoted. Our comrades will report their views at them, then Politburo members will speak, and the appropriate decisions will be made.

Our relations with the Latin American Communist Parties are developing very well. However, overall relations with the countries of Latin America, including economic, are still weak for now. But this continent is very interesting and you, Fidel, of course, know it better than we. There are 290,000,000 people in Latin America, 25 countries, different political systems, and the OAS and the monopolies of North American capital are active. We want to look into all of this in detail.

I have met with many Latin American comrades who have come to our country. I remember the conversation with Corvalan well. I was then in a hospital after an operation. He came to me and we talked about six hours. I recommended to him that they work out a broad program of specific actions and publicly propose it to the people together with Salvador Allende. He liked this idea very much and they worked out such a program, but they did not managed to offer [*vystupit'*] it.

I also met with Altimirano. I liked him less. He made the impression of a vacillating person and too proud. It seems that he is with us right now.

F. CASTRO Yes, he is in the Soviet Union right now. The comrades from the GDR rescued him. Then he was in Cuba, but now he went to the Soviet Union.

L. I. BREZHNEV If I meet him in the Soviet Union I will recommend this tactic: right now is not the time for direct actions, [you] need to gather together all the progressive, all the leftist forces, and unite them. Even if someone makes a mistake and blunders, right now is not the time to exacerbate relations.

According to the information which we have, the junta will not decide to execute Corvalan. Rather, they will sentence him to many years in prison.

F. CASTRO Yes, I think that they will not go so far as to execute him. But nevertheless we should continue the struggle for his liberation.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, yes. Unquestionably. We are continuing to actively work in that direction. We are organizing rallies, and our television and TASS are going great work.

F. CASTRO This is one of the forms of struggle. It is also support.

L. I. BREZHNEV More than once have they told us that Allende also made a mistake.

F. CASTRO As they say, he was between a rock and a hard place. But his position was all the same incorrect. We understood that the Chilean military would make a coup sooner or later.

L. I. BREZHNEV Arismendi and other leaders of Latin American Communist Parties often come to the Soviet Union. We help them with finances. Where this is possible, we help their press, we send paper. They also come to us for vacation. We are doing everything possible for them.

Possibly we are also not taking something into account in our work. But we support the national liberation movement in each of the countries.

F. CASTRO It is very important to support Peru right now. We have very good information about the situation in Peru. I am completely confident that after Cuba the largest revolutionary prospects are concentrated in Peru. The progressive wing in this country is becoming stronger. New information will come to you about the situation in Peru through the same channel via which I previously sent you information about the situation in Chile and Peru. This information contains data about the situation in all the military units, and about the position taken by each of the commanding generals. It also contains information about what these people think of the Soviet Union.

At first the Chinese tried to exert their influence on them; they invited them to China [*k sebe*], stressed their special location, and set them against the Soviet Union. Right now, one could say, there is no Chinese influence in Peru. Each time the Peruvians increasingly understand the role of the Soviet Union. Their trust in the USSR is growing. Much has influenced this, but especially two factors.

L. I. BREZHNEV First, the Chinese and the Americans have recognized the Chilean junta.

F. CASTRO It seems to me that sending Soviet weapons to Peru and the agreement about the construction of a hydroelectric complex in Olmos especially influenced this. The Soviet Union's position with respect to Chile also played a part.

Maldonado, the Minister of the Electric and Mining Industry, heads a group of leftist military men in Peru. He has an adviser who systematically sends us information

about the situation in the country. This is a very intelligent, revolutionary-minded young person. He has great influence inside this progressive group. This is not classic information, but it gives an idea of what is happening there. This information will come to you, I have already sent it. Look at it when you have time. True, it has a lot of pages but, after reading it, you will get an additional idea of the real state of affairs in Peru. I think that after Cuba the most serious political process with deep prospects is developing in Peru.

This country has rich natural resources. It has much hydropower, many minerals, and possibly they have much oil.

L. I. BREZHNEV. Many important international problems exist: Vietnam, the Near East, Cuba, Europe, America, etc. Both domestic as well as international problems have demanded much time and effort on our part. It has been hard for me to devote much attention to the questions of Latin America.

Although [we] have managed to put out the fire in Vietnam, we should not lose sight of this. Obviously the matter will move forward in the Near East. A first step has been made in European affairs. Many countries have recognized the GDR and it has been accepted into the UN. The Munich Agreement has been annulled. We have managed to begin the discussion of questions of European security on the basis of our principles. A new page has begun in relations with America.

The time has come when it is necessary to deal with relations with Latin America more actively. But the matter needs to be dealt with wisely, a frontal attack is not suitable. I agree with you that to start we need to select two or three points. It is hard for us to win economic positions in Latin America, but it's nothing, it is also a distinctive revolutionary process.

F. CASTRO I think that Peru will exert great influence in Latin America. It is important that the Peruvian revolutionary process is accomplished by the military. This will exert great influence on the military circles of other countries. This is not a matter of some extraordinary measures needing to be taken. Evidently it is simply necessary to take into account the political importance that Peru has.

L. I. BREZHNEV This is clear.

Cde. Gromyko is going to the US right now. Obviously the Americans will try to ask him what tendencies exist in Cuba in the sense of settling relations with the United States. I am sure that they will be interested in this question. Possibly Nixon will not ask this question himself, but Kissinger, yes. This is a clever person and, it needs to be said, intelligent. He serves Nixon and looks ahead. He doesn't want to lose his post if another [?President?] comes. He wants to have his positions strong in any event.

Today I will sit with Cde. Gromyko after a reception. We will discuss the questions of the upcoming discussion with Nixon. Cde. Gromyko will unquestionably have to cleverly answer the question of normalization [*uregulirovanie*].

F. CASTRO Do you mean the question of normalization of relations with Cuba.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes.

In this connection I would like to ask you for advice. This question is very delicate. What could Cde. Gromyko do in this case: avoid a discussion or answer something? Although we have no formal agreement the US is actually restrained with respect to its actions against Cuba. This agreement was reached during the well-known crisis. Some days ago we passed you [Eaton]'s information about Cuban émigrés.

Although there are no direct assurances from Nixon, judging from indirect information, he does not support emigration right now. There is a discussion in the US about it being necessary to find a form of normalization of relations with Cuba. Of course, I cannot say how the Americans imagine this. But inasmuch as this discussion is being held, perhaps it's also not worth turning a deaf ear to this. Another means needs to be used which defends the cause of the Cuban Revolution and its independence.

F. CASTRO I think that it is necessary to go gradually in this question. Of course, in no case ought [we] show our impatience. If we show it then the Americans will right away begin to raise the price. In no case ought we let them understand that [we] are very interested in normalization. But at the same time it is necessary to show that a response is found to what is done from their side. Thus, they can be told that a

response is found from our side to what they are saying.

L. I. BREZHNEV So I understood. I would word it this way. The positive and constructive proposals which are being heard in America are perceived with understanding in Cuba. Cuba is ready for a constructive, positive solution to the question. And that's all. More or less in such a form.

F. CASTRO It seems to me that it is a very correct wording. The following could also be added. I think that we need to achieve two goals. The first, direct goal is the elimination of the economic embargo [*blokada*]. The long-term goal is normalization of relations. I stress that this is not the first-priority goal.

Bearing in mind the international situation and the domestic situation in the US, the situation in Latin America, where a number of governments are exerting pressure in this direction - Mexico, Peru, and other countries - an end to the embargo might be put in a short period. The Americans could be told that we Cubans have taken a positive position with respect to an agreement to combat the hijacking of aircraft. An agreement was signed, and thanks to this the Americans were able to solve a very serious problem for them. Now we expect positive steps from their side. They should display this in deed. Everything should be done on a mutual basis.

L. I. BREZHNEV One thought. Some American companies, it seems General Motors and some others, are interested maintaining private ties with Cuba. Can this fact not be used? Would this not then be a step from the private to general [ties]?

F. CASTRO The Americans have several companies in Argentina. These companies are interested in establishing contacts. The Argentinians have offered us credit in order for us to buy goods in Argentina. What have we done? Within the framework of this credit we have requested products which American companies which have enterprises in Argentina make.

The Argentinian government takes a definite position. It will not let American companies on their territory refuse to supply goods to Cuba. These companies are not at all interested in a conflict with the Argentinian government. Therefore they request their headquarters [*tsentral'nye*] institutions in the US give them permission to supply products for Cuba. If they refuse this a conflict with the government of Argentina will arise. But if they begin to trade then the embargo will thus in fact be broken. That's the situation that is developing. We are just holding talks on these questions right now.

At this moment much depends on what Kissinger will say. This question has been passed for his consideration. I think that permission will be given. This is an acute problem for the US. Many governments of the countries of Latin America are demanding that foreign companies operating on their territory obey their decisions.

I have the impression that the economic embargo should be about to collapse. We note that one or another American company is showing their interest in organizing contacts with us through various channels in one form or another. In response we let [them] understand that we are not opposed.

Thus, I think that it is necessary to let the Americans understand that we would like the economic embargo to first be eliminated. And then we will be ready to discuss questions of normalization with them. This is already the last phase, longer and more laborious, because there are many questions: the base in Guantanamo and many others. But right now, at this stage it is not necessary to get involved in the discussion of these problems. Let the lifting of the embargo be a first step preceding subsequent negotiations. This should be our immediate goal.

L. I. BREZHNEV In a free conversation Cde. Gromyko might say: perhaps it's possible to achieve some normalization of relations while preserving the economic embargo? Let them think about it.

F. CASTRO I think this is the form to which one needs to adhere. If they see that we want something with impatience then they will take a tougher position and increase their demands, for they have previously stated publicly that we should break our political and military ties with the Soviet Union. When the matter comes to negotiations we should clearly let [him] understand that such demands are unacceptable.

L. I. BREZHNEV Of course, our troops in Cuba interest them. This idea has taken deep

root with them. Cde. Gromyko will not discuss this subject.

F. CASTRO I think that they are convinced that Cuba is lost to them, and lost finally.

L. I. BREZHNEV Probably.

F. CASTRO I think that the main concern of the Americans right now is to avoid a repeat of the Cuban version in other countries. With respect to Cuba itself they have lost any hope. They see that the positions of the Revolution are strong. The road to the political and ideological penetration of Cuba is closed. They understand this.

L. I. BREZHNEV In the course of all the history during these years it is felt that they don't want Cuba to openly influence the processes taking place in Latin America.

F. CASTRO. We are practically not doing overt work any longer regarding this concern of the Americans. We do not openly operate anywhere. But we should use this concern of the Americans when talks begin. We will say what you will give us in exchange for halting our activity. Briefly put, it is necessary to have this in the talks like a trump card. We will ask, whether they are ready to respect the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Latin American countries. All this needs to be used in the talks.

L. I. BREZHNEV Non-interference should naturally be bilateral.

F. CASTRO And this question concerns not only Cuba, but also all of Latin America. I think that this is the political basis for a discussion.

L. I. BREZHNEV It is the same in our policy. We tied this matter with peace beginning with the 24th CPSU Congress.

F. CASTRO I want to make use of the opportunity and tell Cde. Brezhnev that we well understand the policy of peace which the Soviet Union is pursuing. And we are ready to take an active part in its implementation.

L. I. BREZHNEV Originally many had doubts with respect to this policy: are we not retreating from the principles of proletarian internationalism and the fight against imperialism. Now it is not.

F. CASTRO We have a full understanding of this question in all aspects, in all respects. We not only understand this policy, we also support it. This policy deserves world recognition.

L. I. BREZHNEV And that the delegation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union present in Cuba and what will be announced, and what we have already said even further strengthens the cause of realizing the decisions of the 24th CPSU Congress.

F. CASTRO History is for socialism. Time is working for socialism.

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes.

During the last Crimean meeting I told the comrades that [we] need to think over the question of the advisability of holding a new conference of Communist and worker's Parties. The last conference was held in 1969. It was very difficult to convene it. However, it was held. The documents which were worked out by it have justified themselves. In general, the process is going in the direction envisioned by the conference. Many events have occurred in the world during this time. The war in Vietnam has ended. I hope that war in the Near East ends. A counterrevolutionary coup occurred in Chile, from which an appropriate conclusion should be drawn. Agreements were concluded with the FRG, the Munich Agreement was abolished, the European conference is working, and relations with America have changed. Why can Communist Parties not gather and discuss these questions among themselves? I have managed to talk with many comrades, and the comrades agreed. Cde. Marchais, for example, agreed, the Italian Communist Party agreed, the Belgian Communist Party agreed, the German Communist Party agreed. Thus there are the conditions for accomplishing this idea.

I am not forcing this question.

F. CASTRO For what time do you intend to schedule the meeting?

L. I. BREZHNEV I don't want to set a specific date. I only want for this date to be accepted by a large a number of Parties as possible. And when we feel that a majority of Parties understand the need for the conference and favor holding it then we will begin to act in an organized manner, that is, we will create some organizational committee in some country. Let the comrades work and then consult with their

leadership. When doing this I proceed from the experience of the past. In my opinion, a year needs to be spent on this. Weigh everything, outline an agenda, determine the principles of the work in accordance with the new conditions, and take into account and study the successes and defeats. Right now it is necessary to define the question in principle.

When Cde. Marchais returned from Vietnam we met with him in Moscow, in Zavidovo, and he said that the FCP CC Politburo agreed with holding a conference. To start, he suggested, and we agreed with this, holding regional conferences of fraternal Parties. A conference of Communist Parties of Western Europe has already been held in Brussels. This is an important step.

I think that [we] ought to think about this question. I am not asking for a reply right now, but would be interested in your opinion on this score, Fidel.

F. CASTRO Is your Party for holding this conference?

L. I. BREZHNEV Yes, I myself raised this question.

F. CASTRO Do you want to hold the conference before the congress of the Party? When should it be held?

L. I. BREZHNEV January or the first half of February 1976.

F. CASTRO We are thinking of holding a congress of our Party in the middle of next year.

L. I. BREZHNEV Good. There is still time.

F. CASTRO But much will have to be worked out to hold a good congress. We are already beginning to make steps in this direction.

L. I. BREZHNEV I imagine that such is a first congress. It should be a representative congress. This is an important political event. The Party Charter will probably be discussed. Possibly the platform, too, will outline some forecast in the economy. In general, this is a big matter.

F. CASTRO Thus, the International Conference of Communist Parties should obviously be held before your congress.

L. I. BREZHNEV I am not tying these two questions together. Nothing can interfere with our congress. If [we] manage to hold the conference before the congress, in 1975, this would be good, of course. This would show the growing ties of our Party with the other fraternal Parties. The social processes which are taking place in the world would be collectively analyzed, and [it would be] shown how greatly the role of the Communist Parties has grown in international life, how much the role of trade unions and the working class has grown, how much stronger socialism has become, and the unity of the Communist and worker's movement would be demonstrated. All this is very important.

F. CASTRO I would like to ask a question. Remember when we were talking about Latin America? You said then one could not go into Latin America head-on.

Could you not explain to me what you meant?

L. I. BREZHNEV Latin America is far from us. [Our] economic ties [with them] are not especially strong. How to [exert] influence in such conditions? We are first of all strengthening the ties with the fraternal Parties, we are helping them. When it is necessary we send them weapons secretly. This is done so carefully so as "not get caught red-handed". Obviously, now it is necessary to also go and sell weapons to those countries which guarantee that they fall into reliable hands.

Trade also has its own importance. Here's Canada, for example. It has decided to build its own hydroelectric station. We survived the competition, and Canada gave us the design of the construction of the hydroelectric station. This is also influence. Our people are beginning to work there. Then this shows the Canadian people that the Soviet Union also means something.

What does head-on mean? We cannot send troops to a single Latin American country. This is what I call "head-on [*v lob*]". We cannot intervene in such terms.

F. CASTRO I wasn't thinking of this, of course.

L. I. BREZHNEV But I didn't connect this formulation with you at all, I was talking about our own affairs.

F. CASTRO We understood that building socialism on a narrow economic basis, the production of sugar, is a complex matter. For example, in Czechoslovakia they produce from eight to nine million tons of grain. All the agriculture of the country works for its own consumption. They export other goods. Our agriculture basically operates for the production of sugar. We export millions of tons of food products and at the same time have to supply ourselves with food products. How is our small country, located far from the other socialist countries, to solve questions of economics? Imagine a Moldavia, which decides its economic interests alone. In the future, when Cuba is able to be integrated with the Latin American countries, it will be easier for us to solve economic problems. But for now the path of our economic development will be a difficult path.

L. I. BREZHNEV You have a raw material base for the development of the nickel industry. This is a very expensive metal. There always is a market for it.

F. CASTRO We are second in the world in nickel reserves.

L. I. BREZHNEV Cde. Arkhipov, a deputy of Cde. Skachkov, arrived with us. He is a metallurgist, and is well acquainted with questions of economic ties with Cuba. I talked with him yesterday. He said that he had talked with the Cuban comrades about this question. It seems that no problems exist in this regard.

F. CASTRO What metallurgy do you have in mind? The production of steel or nickel?

L. I. BREZHNEV The production of nickel.

As regards steel, this is a complex question. A quite large dispute about the technology is going on. Coke needs to be delivered, and this is quite difficult. Otherwise, it's necessary to build coke oven batteries. I asked about the status of this question when I was home in the Soviet Union. As I understand, the question of the use of "tailings", that is, the waste from the production of nickel, is being studied. We cannot make a decision without a consultation with science. Otherwise a mistake is possible. We would have survived such a mistake ourselves. But if we make a mistake with respect to Cuba, then it would be unforgiveable. Cuba would not stand for this.

F. CASTRO Let's assume that a technical solution of this question will be found. Then we would like for every effort to be made to help Cuba.

L. I. BREZHNEV This is natural.

F. CASTRO If a technical solution is found I very much hope that Cde. Brezhnev will find the strength to help us develop this sector.

L. I. BREZHNEV The strength can be found. It is important to solve this problem technically.

F. CASTRO We are deeply concerned about this question. It is very important for us to solve the problem of metal. If we don't solve it then our development might come to a standstill.

L. I. BREZHNEV This is right.

F. CASTRO We very much need metal. It is also needed for the development of the sugar industry, and for the needs of other industrial sectors, construction, and the production of agricultural equipment. They all require a large quantity of metal, but there is not enough of it.

L. I. BREZHNEV I well understand this.

F. CASTRO Perhaps in the long term we will have the same difficult problem as energy. We can gather all the capable economists of the world and pose them with the question of the development of the Cuban economy, and none of them will find a way out without metal. It is a barrier for us on the foreign market across which we cannot jump. All the socialist countries need metal themselves. We cannot get this from them. But we have no hard currency to buy metal on the capitalist market, so we cannot get metal either on the socialist or the capitalist market.

L. I. BREZHNEV I did not touch on this question by accident. Not to avoid it, but because you have understood the essence of the question well.

F. CASTRO It is very good that you understand this question, it has enormous importance for us. We need complete understanding of this question from your side.

L. I. BREZHNEV The understanding exists. The entire problem is to find an economically and technically competent solution. We will search together.

What other questions are we faced with?

F. CASTRO It seems to me that there is still one question, but it is rather for reflection. This concerns prices. It is well known that there is inflation in the world and prices are rising. The prices for the Soviet goods which we import are going up quickly. This concerns a majority of the goods. What is this leading to? It is leading to the majority of those advantages which we got after the signing of a number of agreements in December 1972 being practically wiped out by rise of prices for Soviet goods. What was so much in 1972 (F. CASTRO makes a gesture) will be so much in 1980 (also makes a gesture), inasmuch as prices for Soviet goods in correlation with the prices for our goods eliminates everything.

I raise this question in order for you to know that such a problem exists. It worries us.

L. I. BREZHNEV I also briefly raised this question at the start of our conversation. Prices for oil are rising on the world market, and prices are rising sharply for metal, and there exist free-market prices for grain and sugar. In a word, problems have been created in these questions.

Therefore, as I have already said, we have created a Commission in the Politburo to look into it in time to analyze the question.

F. CASTRO This is not only about prices for oil. The reasons for this phenomenon are understood. We are speaking about the prices for the majority of Soviet goods. What is happening in this regard? The prices for our goods have not changed and are not changing, but the prices are changing for the goods which we buy.

L. I. BREZHNEV Cuba has its own peculiarities with respect to our and world prices. We have our own. In some cases we gain an advantage, in others, on the contrary.

F. CASTRO Briefly put, this creates a quite serious problem. The balance of payments deficit is growing, and the effectiveness of the credits is lowered.

I am speaking of this because a problem exists. I don't want to use the visit to pose this question. I talked about it so that you know that it exists.

In a word, if you ask me what questions trouble me for the future I would reply that they are these two questions: the question of prices which exists not only in our trade with the Soviet Union, but also in trade with other socialist countries; and the second question is metal.

L. I. BREZHNEV We are also thinking about these questions.

In conclusion I want to say some words about the Chinese question. There is no improvement in relations with China yet and none is envisioned. Evidently a process of internal struggle is going on there. At the meeting of the leaders of the fraternal Parties in Crimea I said in that regard that Maoism, as an anti-Leninist and anti-Marxist trend, should be defeated theoretically. I think this should be the main task of the Marxist-Leninist Parties. We cannot allow Maoism to replace Marxism-Leninism. Some changes will probably take place after Mao's departure. All that was good in the Party before this cannot pass unnoticed. Time is needed. The majority of fraternal Parties are working against Maoism. I think that the Latin American Communist Parties will turn away from the Maoists even because of the Chilean question alone. The case of Chile showed the real face of the Maoists.

F. CASTRO There is no doubt of that. As a matter of fact, even before Chile they lost much in the eyes of Latin Americans. But the Chilean case finally liquidated their prestige.

We have no political ties with the Chinese. We maintain only economic ties with them. We have no reason to treat them with political respect. We have no ties with them and no desire to have them. I think the same as you, that some resolution of this question might begin only after Mao departs.

L. I. BREZHNEV This is right.

Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV and Cde. F. CASTRO arranged to hold a concluding meeting between the Soviet and Cuban delegations before the signing of the Soviet-Cuban Declaration.

The record [of the conversation] was made by Cdes. O. T. Darusenkov and N. V.

[surname indistinct]
(O. T. Darusenkov interpreted)

[signatures of the two men]