

February 12, 1969

Note from the Conversation between the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Comrade Jędrychowski, and the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba, Flores Ibarra

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Summary:

The discussion between Comrade Jędrychowski, Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Cuban Ambassador Flores Ibarra focused on Polish-Cuban trade and political relations. The conversation highlighted challenges in bilateral trade, including sugar overproduction and quality concerns for Cuban citrus fruits, while emphasizing Cuba's plans to diversify exports and expand coffee and sugar production. Politically, relations were characterized as stable, with mutual understanding, though the Cuban ambassador explained Cuba's absence from recent Communist Party congresses due to internal decisions. This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

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NOTE

from the conversation between the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Comrade Jędrychowski, and the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba, Flores Ibarra.

The conversation with Comrade Jędrychowski took place at the request of Ambassador Flores Ibarra.

At the outset, the Cuban Ambassador informed that he would be leaving for Havana in a few days and would therefore like to exchange some views on bilateral Polish-Cuban relations.

Ambassador F. Ibarra said he believes that trade relations between Poland and Cuba are developing successfully. The trade in goods provided for in the protocol for the current year shows a 20% increase compared to 1968. The main difficulties were the lack of mutually complementary goods. Cuba is a sugar producer, as is Poland. In the past, there were facts of clashes on the markets of Cuban sugar with Polish sugar. The Cuban goods list provides for the first time, although still a small amount, coffee deliveries to Poland this year, amounting to 200 tons. In the future, the Cuban side will aim to increase trade with Poland on the basis of deliveries to Poland of non-sugar products /coffee, citrus fruits, pineapples/.

Comrade Jędrychowski explained that the purchase of Cuban sugar took place at the Cuban request. Comrade Dorticos submitted this request to the Communist states in Moscow. In fact Poland cut off the purchase of 100 thousand tons of sugar from Cuba. The Cuban side sold Poland 50 thousand tons. The Polish demand resulted from imprecise calculations regarding the results of its own sugar production. Poland will meet its internal sugar needs with its own production. Sugar beet plantations, apart from the fact that they influence the improvement of the general agricultural culture, bring a considerable amount of feed. Poland does not intend to develop export sugar production. It will maintain sugar exports within the limits of the standards established by the Sugar Convention. When it comes to citrus fruit, the Polish recipient is very demanding. He thinks there is a matter of improving the quality of Cuban citrus fruit. In the future, we would be interested in purchasing vegetable oil, necessary for the production of margarine. So far, Poland has been producing margarine based on rapeseed oil, which, due to its bitterness, requires an admixture of sunflower oil and peanuts.

(end p. 1)

Ambassador F. Ibarra reported that, as far as he knows, Cuba is not focused on producing oilseeds. Cuba has had difficulties in purchasing pineapple seeds. Due to the intervention of the US consulate, it was not possible to purchase these seeds in Mexico. They were recently purchased in Ghana. Citrus fruits of lower quality come mainly from old plantations. Cuba is making great efforts to improve their quality and even their aesthetic appearance. In the coming years, it intends to produce 600 thousand tons of coffee. Newly established coffee plantations, mainly around Havana, serve this purpose. However, the main task is to produce 10 million tons of sugar in 1970. As F. Castro declared - the amount of this production is mathematically achievable. Even if it were a year of drought, we have a fairly wide raw material base, and the investments made in the sugar industry secure the possibility of achieving production of 10 million tons. The workforce is also more rationally distributed. The degree of mechanization of cane harvesting has increased disproportionately.

Cuba is rapidly developing a fishing fleet. Even the US press is noticing that it is beginning to compete, especially in Canada, with the US fishing fleet.

Comrade Jędrychowski asked for information on whether Cuba is a producer of fishmeal. Poland imports large quantities of this product from Peru and Chile. What is the problem of the mining industry?

The ambassador explained that new copper deposits had been discovered near the old copper mines (Pinar del Rio). Poland imports 30% of copper sinter from Cuba. We had difficulties with the extraction and production of manganese sinter. There were also difficulties in nickel production. Cuba concluded a contract with the GDR for the purchase of 20 fishing vessels in exchange for the delivery of fish meal.

F. Ibarra, moving on to bilateral political relations, stated that they were normal. He

wanted to explain the reasons behind the decision not to have representatives of the Cuban Communist Party to the last Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party. The delegation of the Cuban Communist Party also did not participate in the Congress of the GDR party. The decision not to participate in the congresses of individual parties was made at the meeting of the Cuban Communist Party, after the congress

(end p. 2)

of the Bulgarian Party. At this Congress, the Cuban comrades presented their views on some political aspects. These views were met with disapproval mainly by some representatives of the Latin American Communist Parties. It is also customary for the Party Congresses to be used for the exchange of opinions and views on the international movement. Our Party's position on this issue was presented. We do not believe that our delegations should participate in the Congresses just to convey greetings.

They are satisfied with their political relations with Poland. Perhaps the Polish party has shown the greatest understanding of Cuban reality. They have also not noticed any information in the Polish press that is harmful to Cuba. Such facts have appeared in press publications in other Communist states. Comrade Jędrychowski replied that Poland is trying to understand the internal situation of Cuba, to look for those common elements that unite both countries.

The Cuban Ambassador expressed his belief that the next stage in the development of economic relations between Poland and Cuba would be the arrival of Comrade C. R. Rodríguez to Poland at the end of March. There is the issue of establishing a Mixed Commission and the level of their chairmanship. The Cuban side believes that the leadership of these commissions should be secured at the level of the Deputy Prime Minister. Currently, work is already underway on the statute of this commission. Comrade Jędrychowski pointed out that it would be quite difficult for all the commissions to be headed by Deputy Prime Ministers. In this case, a practical solution must be found. Currently, Democratic Republic of Vietnam [DRW] has contacted Poland about establishing a similar Commission. They are counting on a transition to peaceful construction.

The Cuban Ambassador was interested in the upcoming meeting of representatives of the USA and the People's Republic of China in Warsaw. As he knows, several high-ranking State Department officials were to arrive from the USA for this meeting. The meeting is taking place at the request of the People's Republic of China. In diplomatic circles, much attention is paid to this meeting. Comrade Jędrychowski - in certain circles of US politicians there are tendencies to revise the US policy towards the People's Republic of China. However, it seems that the USA, apart from a possible exchange of journalists and scientists, will not go for further expansion of relations with the People's Republic of China for now.

Comrade Jędrychowski asked for more information on the facts of the hijacking of airplanes to Cuba, and for the

(end p. 3)

Cuban Ambassador's view on the recent nationalization activities of the Peruvian government. Ambassador F. Ibarra believes that the recent moves of the Peruvian government are, on the whole, a positive phenomenon. Ambassador F. Ibarra believes that the recent moves of the Peruvian government are, on the whole, a positive phenomenon. However, this does not change its nature.

As for the hijacking of planes to Havana, it is not inspired in any way by Cuba. The fact of hijacking probably has many reasons. There are Cuban emigrants who, having no other way to return to the country, decide to do this. It is also probably a way of infiltrating foreign agents. The planes with passengers are returned. Due to flight safety, the passengers are transported by the US airline from Varadero to Miami.

In conclusion, Comrade Jędrychowski asked to convey personal greetings to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Comrade Raul Roa.

[Note prepared by] specialist

/E. Ciurus /

(end p. 4)