

May 24, 1979

**Memorandum of Conversation between
Minister-counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Havana
M. Manasov and Cuban Communist Party CC
member Raul Valdes Vivo, 7 May 1979**

Citation:

"Memorandum of Conversation between Minister-counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Havana M. Manasov and Cuban Communist Party CC member Raul Valdes Vivo, 7 May 1979", May 24, 1979, Wilson Center Digital Archive, TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 76, d. 834, ll. 82-84 <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/113031>

Summary:

Memorandum of conversation between Minister-counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Havana M. Manasov and Cuban Communist Party CC member Raul Valdes Vivo where Vivo discusses plans for Soviet-Cuban cooperation on the Zimbabwe situation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

From the journal of
M.A.Manasov

SECRET

copy no. 3

re: no 265

"24" May 1979

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

with member of the CC Com[munist]Party of Cuba comr. Raul Valdes Vivo

7 May 1979

I met with R.V. Vivo in the CC of the Party and, referring to the instructions of the Soviet ambassador, informed him of the discussion in the International Section of the CC CPSU with the members of the Executive Committee of the Jamaican People's National Party (PNP).

R.V. Vivo, having thanked me for the information, noted the significance of this meeting, which will enable the development of the connection between the CPSU and the PNP and, first and foremost, opens the possibility for the preparation of PNP cadres in the Soviet Union.

Then, in the course of the discussion, R.V. Vivo spoke about his recent trip to several African countries, which was carried out on the orders of F. Castro. This trip was undertaken, continued my interlocutor, because of the fact that the information which we had received from our embassies in a number of African countries is of a subjective nature. In this connection I [Valdes Vivo] was given the task of becoming acquainted with the situation on location, to have discussions with the leaders of Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Nigeria, and likewise with the Soviet ambassadors in these countries, in order to receive more complete and more objective information about the state of affairs in southern Africa.

I was tasked, he said, to convey to J[oshua]. Nkomo [leader of the Zimbabwe African Political Union, ZAPU] and R. Mugabe [leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union, ZANU], that Cuba is unable to satisfy their request to send pilots for the repulsion of air attacks on the training camps for the Patriotic Front armed forces; to clarify the possibility of unified action between ZAPU and ZANU; to lay out before their leaders and the leadership of the front-line governments the Cuban plan for the creation of a provisional government in Zimbabwe.

R.V. Vivo meanwhile remarked that in Angola at first there had not been clear cooperation between Cuba and the USSR, whereas in Ethiopia our countries have achieved the full coordination of our joint actions. The policy of Cuba and the Soviet Union with regard to southern Africa should likewise be coordinated, he underscored.

My interlocutor laid out the essence of the Cuban plan, which is summarized as follows. The declaration of a provisional government in Zimbabwe is realized not in exile, but in a part of the liberated territory of the country; J. Nkomo is proposed for the post of president of the country, R. Mugabe for prime minister; the program platform of the provisional government provides for the realization of a series of social-economic transformations, secures the interests of those countries which recognize its government; the rights of the white part of the population are guaranteed, elections are planned for the legislative organs of the country; constitutional guarantees are proclaimed, etc.

According to the words of R.V. Vivo, J. Nkomo and R. Mugabe have agreed with this plan, as have the leaders of the front-line states. The provisional government, in the estimation of the Cuban side, would possibly be recognized at first by 30 countries.

The active interference of England in the affairs of Zambia may ensure the victory of the puppet government, which would possibly lead to a conflict between ZANU and ZAPU if the unity of their actions are not achieved, noted my interlocutor.

He reported that the armed forces of the ZANU and the ZAPU include in total 24 thousand people (12 thousand in each organization), but unfortunately, these forces are as yet inactive. In the ranks of mercenaries there are 3 thousand blacks and 2 thousand whites.

R.V. Vivo briefly set forth the content of his discussion with the Soviet ambassador in Mozambique. According to his words, during the discussion of the situation in southern Africa, our ambassador noted that according to the theory of Marxism-Leninism, it is impossible to accelerate events in a country where there is not a revolutionary situation and where there is not civilization. "To that I responded in jest to the Soviet ambassador," said R.V. Vivo, "that if comrades L.I. Brezhnev and F. Castro decide that our countries will take part in the operations in Rhodesia, then we will participate in them."

By my request R.V. Vivo briefly informed me about the work of the last plenum of the CC Comparty of Cuba. He reported that the plenum summed up the fulfillment of the resolutions of the First Party Congress, revealed the deficiencies in the development of the national economy of the country, and set its course to overcome them. In view of the fact that the project for the resolution of the plenum on the given question did not reflect all aspects of the economic situation, the corresponding section of the CC of the Party was tasked with its reworking and with its publication.

With regard to the resolution of the plenum of the CC concerning the appointment of Lionel Soto [Prieto] as a member of the Secretariat of the CC of the Party, R.V. Vivo spoke very highly of him ("He is no Garcia Pelaes," he said) and reported, that L. Soto will be occupied with the issues of the party leadership of the country's economy; along the party line he is tasked with responsibility for Khuseplan, the National Bank, GKES [State Committee for Economic Cooperation], and other central organs of the national economy.

COUNSELLOR-MINISTER OF THE EMBASSY OF THE USSR IN THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA

/s/ M. Manasov

[Source: TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 76, d. 834, ll. 82-84.]