

June 14, 1961

**Vittorio Vidali (senior Italian communist), Notes on
a Trip to Cuba, Spring 1961 (excerpt)**

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Summary:

Vittorio Vidali, a senior Italian communist, comments on a trip to Cuba he took in the Spring of 1961, providing observations of the Cuban Revolution in particular.

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NOTES OF COMRADE VIDALI'S TRIP TO CUBA

[...]

After the May 1st demonstrations [in Havana], in the following days there was a meeting of all the Communist Party delegates in Latin America. Present were the members of the Cuban P.S.P. leadership, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and others.

The discussion unfolded on the basis of a detailed document from the B.P. [Politburo] of the P.S.P. and this lasted, I think, five lively days. The daily agenda was "The Cuban revolution and the countries of Latin America." At the end of the debate the document presented by B.P. was collected and the B.P. of the P.S.P. was charged with publishing an editorial in "Fundamentos" for the May issue, on the basis of the discussion.

The discussion fundamentally revolved around the problem of the pacifism and violence of socialism and of the tangible efficacy of guerrilla warfare. There were differing opinions, particularly from the Argentine delegations ([Rodolfo] Ghioldi) and on the part of the Brazilian delegation.

The editorial-document contained the following concepts:

The Cuban revolution represents progress for revolution in every country in Latin America.

For that, the first duty of every anti-imperialist revolutionary, socialist or Latin American democrat is that of defending the Cuban revolution. One can not be anti-imperialist, patriots, progressives, revolutionary, socialists, communists, without defending, supporting Cuba.

Defending Cuba means defending national independence, independence of politics and economics, national sovereignty, unity of Latin American and the rights and demands of the workers and poor peasants. From when the Cuban revolution triumphed, every country in Latin America is more free. Yankee imperialism can not use the same past methods of appeal through discount offers, coaxing and blackmail.

Cuba is especially interested in the development of the national and social liberation movement and vice versa.

This solidarity has at its core the fact that the people of Latin America are geographically close, for their [shared] history and for the struggle against a common enemy: American imperialism.

The United States of America wants to use the countries of Latin America in the battle against Cuba. A victory over Cuba would mean reinforcing imperialism; a victory for the Cuban revolution facilitates revolution in every country of Latin America.

In accordance with the Declaration of the Moscow Conference of 81 communist and workers' parties, one must be against the exportation of revolution and at the same time struggle with maximum energy against the exportation of counterrevolution.

The North American aggressions against Cuba, the preparations for military intervention in Cuba and in every Latin American country, the proclamation of the

right to "intervene" invoking the Monroe doctrine, the fight against communism for the "security" of the West, etc. are all done and thought up only to protect, and defend the interests of the yankee monopolies.

In Latin America there exists a strong movement against intervention. The principle of "non-intervention" is defended also by conservative elements. For that, the defense of national sovereignty and of the right of self-determination of every Latin American population must be undertaken with vigor, energetically denouncing every effort of imperialist intervention, unilateral or "collective." Cuba, defeating the mercenaries, contributed to saving the peace.

In spite of the recent aggression, the Cuban government is in favor of a method of direct negotiations for peacefully resolving every problem and is prepared to re-establish diplomatic and friendly relations between the two countries.

Peace is defended by defending Cuba, fighting for the principle of "non-intervention" and respecting the right to self-determination of the people. Solidarity between the Latin American countries and between these countries and Cuba, the solidarity between socialist countries, continued and unselfish, and the solidarity of the whole world with Cuba, is that which makes for a solid base for the struggle for peace.

Friends of the Cuban revolution are the people, patriots, revolutionaries, anti-imperialists, and partisans for peace.

Enemies of the Cuban revolution are the exploiters [also translated as "pimps" - trans.], millionaires, imperialists, reactionary militarists, and mercenaries.

Imperialism, and its agents, the media and press, subsidized trade unions, conduct an intense campaign against Cuba, to falsify the truth of the revolution, to isolate the Cuban people, to justify aggression.

It is necessary to fight back against these works; systematically propagandizing the truth about Cuba, intensifying the solidarity with the Cuban people as a means to elevate the knowledge of the necessity of economic-social changes in the Latin American masses.

As it stands currently, between the Latin American countries there are many differences in regards to the economic, political, [and] social development.

However, there is a common ground between the Latin American people, other than Cuba, all are victims of exploitation and of political oppression by the United States; all, more or less, are missing their own industrial development; in all exists semi-feudal land ownership [latifondismo semifeudale] and imperialism; foreign monopolies have dominion over the fonts of raw materials, services and industries; in these countries there is hunger, chronic unemployment, illiteracy, a lack of hygiene; they export their raw materials and partially-made products and import industrial articles and even basic foodstuffs.