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The following is a translation of a report dated
6 December 1962 sent by the Italian Embassy in
Habana to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In my dispatch of 9 November I reported on some of the considerations regarding the consequences which the recent crisis could have on the international position of Cuba. I will now add some comments on the conjecture which has been reported by some members of our representations.

1) The possibility that there will soon be a loosening of the political and economic ties with the USSR appears to me to be nil at this time. The fact that the talks with Mikoyan were long and difficult and that Castro expressed in private his opinion on Khrushchev (wishing that Stalin were still alive) does not mean that he can and will renounce that Soviet assistance which is vital to him. This assistance cannot be replaced by the Chinese.

Certainly the Chinese Ambassador to Habana will have done everything possible to convince Castro to resist (and in fact the latter held firm on the question of inspection). Certainly the activity of the Chinese representation here is intense. But the Peiping Government cannot replace the USSR in economic assistance. It does not seem probable to me that China can furnish more than it has furnished to date, which consists of second quality foodstuffs, rather shoddy

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wool and silk material, and many trifles of which the stores in Habana are full. As for machinery and spare parts, China is not in a position to compete with that merchandise supplied by the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland.

In substance Castro, even if he cannot exactly be defined as pro-Khrushchev, is tied to the USSR in such a way that he cannot for any reason release himself. I recall in this regard that on 2 November, after the visit of U Thant during the most acute moment of the crisis in Cuban-Soviet relations, he declared, "We are above all Marxist-Leninists and friends of the USSR. There will be no breaches in our relations."

Given this, I feel that the statements of the vice director of TASS as reported by the Embassy in Helsinki are a good resume of the situation, i.e., a) Soviet leaders have for some time felt perplexed with regard to Castro's character and person because he is reluctant to be "guided" docilely by Moscow. b) The USSR will continue to give all its economic support to Cuba because otherwise its prestige would suffer a grave blow particularly in Latin America.

2) Also excluded, it appears to me, is the possibility that the revolutionary regime of Castro can be changed into a "Titoist" regime. It is comprehensible that, as Ambassador Zoppi reported, some "non-aligned" countries and even some Latin American countries desire such a change and are doing everything possible to provoke it. It is also possible that some Cubans share these sentiments. But, in my opinion, it is impossible that such a change can take place while Castro is in power. As I pointed out in my previous report, it is not in Castro's temperament to become "non-aligned", to imitate anyone, and even less to take Tito as a model. Therefore Castro would have to be eliminated, and this possibility seems very remote.

3) As I noted in my 9 November report it is difficult for Castro to remain calm. Therefore the revolutionary regime will continue with all means at its disposition to disseminate subversive propaganda in the whole continent, as demonstrated by the fact that all the states of Latin America (including Mexico) are taking strong measures against the dissemination of this propaganda. But it is doubtful that today Castro can do much more and that he constitutes a real menace to the security of other countries, if only because he lacks the necessary funds. I tend to share the opinion of the Ambassador to Brazil that the Cuban leaders are trying to concentrate all their subversive efforts in one country, and that they have selected Venezuela for various reasons, including the old ill feeling between Castro and Betancourt. I note in passing that, according to what was told me by the aforementioned Ambassador, during the recent meeting of the OAS the Venezuelan representative accused the Cubans of promoting the recent attempts in his country but, when asked to furnish proof, he was unable to do so.

It would certainly be highly desirable if a serious pressure action on Cuba could be exercised within a purely Latin American framework as pointed out by our Embassy in

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Buenos Aires. But it is an extremely remote possibility. The countries which could do it do not have the necessary material means. A partial solution would worsen the situation and a definitive solution could be directed only by Washington. I think therefore that only pressure which is accompanied by material strength can obtain results in Cuba.

In conclusion, in judging the Cuban situation it is necessary first to keep in mind the personality and temperament of Fidel Castro, the influence which he has on a part of the population, and finally his deep-rooted hate of the United States. It is useless to say that the Cuban revolutionary regime, purged of some fanaticism, could be a good example for other Latin American countries. This would not take into account the mentality of the Cuban leaders and particularly their chief, who accepts council from no one and intends to imitate no one. Furthermore it is too late to select another path. As Guevara said the other day in an interview for the Daily Worker, "this is a battle to the death with the United States in which the most possible damage must be done to the adversary."

Undoubtedly, after the events of October and November, Fidel Castro is in a descending parabola. But how long this descent will last no one can say today. The only certain thing is that the economic situation is getting worse every day and therefore the revolutionary regime needs the assistance of the whole Communist world. Only last night a commercial mission headed by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, who heads the most important institution of the country - the Institute for Agrarian Reform - left. The mission will go first to Moscow and then to Peiping. It is evident that new agreements must be negotiated, as well as new credits, to permit the Cubans to last through 1963, which will certainly be the most difficult year.

But economic assistance can permit this country to survive, not resolve its problems. For a definitive solution it would be necessary in the first place for the Cubans to learn to work seriously and to use intelligently the machines which they have. Agricultural production, principally sugar cane, as has been recognized even by the fanatics of industrialization, constitutes the basis of the Cuban economy. But how can they hope for a good harvest if, for example, the tractors furnished by Hungary which should last ten years are unusable after two years?

It is not possible to forecast the fall of the regime solely on the basis of economic factors. The people suffer from an insufficiency of food and clothing. But for another year they will find a way to get by.

Summed up, the decisive and at the same time prudent policy followed by the United States in the recent months is the best and perhaps the only policy. After the danger of strategic weapons has been eliminated, the wisest measure is to let the situation mature. Certainly Fidel Castro will

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