

Letter to Fidel Castro January 31, 1963

by Nikita Khrushchev

Dear comrade Fidel Castro:

For some time I have been considering the idea of writing you this letter. Now, on my way to Moscow from Berlin, where I attended the Congress of Socialist Unity Party of Germany, I write to you. Our train is crossing the fields and forests of Soviet Byelorussia and it occurs to me how wonderful it would be if you could see, on a sunny day like this, the ground covered with snow and the forests silvery with frost.

Perhaps you, a southern man, have seen this only in paintings. It must surely be fairly difficult for you to imagine the ground carpeted with snow and the forests covered with white frost. It would be good if you could visit our country each season of the year; every one of them, spring, summer, fall, and winter, has its delights.

Cuba is a country of eternal summer. I remember that during our talk in New York, we reacted differently to the weather of that city. I was choking with heat, but you told me you felt chilly.

Nevertheless, all these thoughts about nature should not carry us away from the principal theme of this letter. The most important is the strong desire my comrades and I feel to see you and to talk, to talk with our hearts open. We have much to talk about. We hope that this meeting, this conversation, will not be delayed for long. We would like the meeting to take place as soon as possible.

Why? Well, because we have lived through a very important stage, one that represents a landmark in the historical development of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the other socialist countries. For the first time since the end of the Second World War we have been close, very close, to war. Cuba has found itself at the center of the acute crisis in the Caribbean.

We understand that the extreme gravity of the crisis has now passed, but the danger of a confrontation has not yet ended. You understand this very well, and we fully share your worry and view the situation as you do.

But, what is most important today? Why do we need to meet and talk frankly?

The gravity of the crisis created by North American imperialism in the Caribbean has ended. But it seems to me that this crisis has left a mark, although barely visible, in the relations between our states — Cuba and the Soviet Union — and in our own personal relationship. Speaking frankly, these relations are not what they were before the crisis. I will not conceal the fact that this troubles and worries us. And it seems to me that the development of our relations will depend, in large part, on our meeting. . . . Correspondence is insufficient. Nothing can substitute for a personal

conversation. It is precisely through such a talk that we can overcome more easily and quickly any misunderstanding of each other's positions. . . .

. . . During the Caribbean crisis, our viewpoints did not always coincide, we did not see the different stages of the crisis in the same way; it was clear that we viewed the ways to solve it differently. After our known statement, you even said publicly that during the development of the crisis there had emerged certain differences between the Soviet government and the Cuban government. You can understand that for us this was no cause for joy. Now the tensions have diminished; and now that we have entered into a new phase in the relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union, on one hand, and [between the Soviet Union and] the United States of North America, on the other, there are still gaps, which are difficult to assess, in our relations with Cuba.

That is why we want to meet — to even out, to close the gaps in our relations, whatever their extent; even if they are only small, we would try to smooth them out. In the relations between two socialist states there must be no rough edges; our relations must be truly fraternal.

Now that some time separates us from the acute stages of the crisis and we can proceed with a calm analysis of all its aspects, I shall permit myself, dear friend, to recall some events and examine the events that took place.

I would like to state frankly, so there is no doubt in your mind, why it is that we proposed to deploy our ballistic missiles in Cuba. I want to tell you this because even the representatives of certain socialist states are thinking in a rather curious way, distorting not only our initial steps but also those we took later, and obscuring their positions with vigorous revolutionary phrases regarding persistence in the face of common class enemies, and other Marxist slogans. Why then do they take the liberty to judge the steps of other governments when, as you know perfectly well, they didn't actually do anything to help Cuba when it faced mortal danger?

You may have observed that certain people and groups, and even the leaders of certain socialist countries, who limited themselves to observing the crisis, started to get agitated and to pontificate on the ways in which one should have acted during the crisis, criticizing those who carried the burden of the struggle. They say that we should have proceeded in this or that way, taken such-and-such a step, although they themselves took no steps and held themselves at the sidelines of the real struggle. We may rightly ask these critics why they, at the height of the crisis, did not take any step — verbal or material — that would have demonstrated their willingness to aid Cuba, to march with you if war broke out.

In those days, those critics gave no proof of any such willingness and limited themselves to insulting capitalism and imperialism. Were we to compete with them in this practice, we would win the contest easily: it is well known that the Russian language has an enormous number of insults.

In the first days of the revolution, we hurled prodigious vituperations against imperialism; but then we were the only socialist country; and our economic and military strength was weak. Today things are different: the Soviet Union is no longer the only socialist state, and there is a powerful socialist world system, the community of socialist states. This is why the Republic of Cuba is not alone. When it put itself under the banner of Marxism-Leninism, Cuba joined the community of socialist countries. We applauded it and we continue to do so — and not only with words.

Our country, which fought difficult battles to save the achievements of the October Revolution, repelled the intervention by fourteen states, and played a decisive role in the defeat of the Hitlerian war machine; our country, which went unrecognized by the United States for seventeen

years and which other countries also did not recognize for a long time, has a very clear idea of the difficulties that confront the Cuban people, their leader, and his comrades in their efforts to defend the Cuban Revolution, to safeguard the right of the Cuban people to decide its own destiny when it has next to it a neighbor as strong, aggressive, and implacable as North American imperialism.

We were the first to know of the infinite vileness of the methods and ways of fighting of the enemy. When Churchill, who headed the crusade to strangle the October Revolution, was unable, with all his allies, to bring the Soviet nation to its knees through intervention, they turned to economic blockade. They were sure that we would lack the means, the strength, and the cadres needed to rebuild our shattered economy. They believed that Soviet Russia would disintegrate by itself, that hunger would smother it, that typhus would kill it, and that the experiment of building socialism would collapse.

But what happened? . . . Guided by the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, communists have demonstrated their capacity to create material value on a new socialist base, as well as their capacity to develop culture, to elevate science to a level that is now the summit for all the states in the world. It is not by chance that after we launched our ships into space, the United States sent a delegation to our country to study our public education system, our preparation of engineers and of scientific personnel. That delegation developed a very high appreciation of our education system. In the Soviet Union we graduate three times as many engineers as did the United States, which is evidence of the intellectual development of society and of the way in which the peoples' knowledge has been extended. And the greater our knowledge, the earlier we will assure the final victory.

When the Cuban Revolution took place, its enemies were seized with panic. They saw that a socialist Cuba could be a guiding star, a magnet for all Latin American countries, for all peoples fighting for their independence and liberty. The peoples that have merely achieved their political liberation from the colonial yoke, but who have not yet managed to become the true proprietors of their countries, see in Cuba a model for the solution of their social problems.

This is why we are firmly convinced that the United States of North America will never resign itself to the existence of a socialist Cuba. We knew that they would do all they could to eliminate socialist Cuba and to maintain the capitalist system in all the countries of the western hemisphere. Precisely with this end in mind they went to the archives, and dusted off the Monroe Doctrine, which they had practically renounced.

. . . Today, the United States has reserved for itself the "right" to involve itself in the affairs of Europe, Asia, and the other continents, forming military alliances of imperialist countries to carry out a third world war. Nevertheless, it would hold the part of the Monroe Doctrine referring to the western hemisphere to remain in effect so as to suffocate liberating revolutions, to erect a barrier against socialism.

The leadership of the Soviet state — the presidium of the central committee and the government — often changed its views in looking for the most effective way to help Cuba. When the Yankees announced the economic blockade against Cuba, when they left it without fuel, without other materials and essential products, when the republic felt an acute need for prepared cadres and was running into enormous difficulties, we gave you, without hesitation, a fraternal helping hand to aid you in all areas.

The truth is that people who have lost their communist consciousness now accuse the Soviet Union of giving aid with mercantile goals in mind. But such accusations are motivated by ill will; the accusers have lost their common sense, the capacity to consider the question in a sensible way.

We can take any dispute about this and present real facts that prove just how unfounded that accusation is.

I don't think that there is any proof lacking that, in aiding Cuba, we are not pursuing any self-serving ends. Only a madman would think that we are getting rich or profiting from it. In giving Cuba great material aid, we do it consciously because we are communists. We ourselves have suffered immense difficulties in our struggle for socialism, and we know from experience that it is not easy to create a new society. We have given aid to Cuba, and we will continue to give it. We are looking forward.

With the failure of its plans to strangle Cuba through the economic blockade and through the breaking of diplomatic relations, North American imperialism started to prepare armed invasion and, in 1961, unleashed its mercenaries against Cuba.

But North American imperialism underestimated the cohesion, the will to triumph, and the degree of organization of the Cuban people, its faithfulness to the ideas of liberty and independence, its trust in its leaders, its trust in you, dear Fidel. You defeated the enemy. All of us, all socialist countries, and all progressive men are proud of your glorious victory.

It was clear to us that the North Americans, having been defeated once, would not resign themselves to it, that they would change tactics and more or less repeat the invasion. However, it would be a much better prepared invasion, hence much more dangerous, since they would take into account the lessons from the first defeat. The North Americans themselves even spoke openly of this. For example, in their conversations with our representatives, they would frequently recall the events of 1956 in Hungary. They took them as an example of energetic measures, trying to find in them some justification for their measures against the Cuban Revolution. You, they told us, proceeded in this way in your own self-interest, because Hungary is close to your borders; but we also have the right to undertake such energetic measures against Cuba, which is close to our country. Naturally, our representatives emphatically rejected such "foundations" for a new invasion against Cuba.

Our party and our government saw that they were moving, in effect, toward an invasion. And you, Cuban comrades, as was shown in your statements, understood and felt the real danger of such an act of aggression, and you, exhorted the people to defend the revolutionary conquests.

We considered, and we still consider, that your slogan of "*Patria o Muerte*" [Fatherland or Death] was completely just, revolutionary. But, at the same time, we understood that it was impossible to restrain imperialism with only a heroic readiness to resist unto death. It was clear that the imperialists wanted to prepare the Cuban people for death, not for victory. And the imperialists of the United States disposed themselves of great forces to move on little Cuba, and Cuba naturally cannot confront such a war machine for long. How could one help Cuba in this situation? Some chose the path of revolutionary slogans. In the days of the crisis, they expressed their support for the Declaration of 1957 and the Declaration of 1958 of the eighty-one parties but, in fact, they did not lend any effective support, aside from protests and solidarity demonstrations with Cuba. These men, naturally, pronounced not a few just words on the heroism of the Cuban people, of its maximum leader, of his comrades in arms, of their intrepidity and readiness to die but not to surrender to the enemy. Yet, could aggression be contained by giving Cuba only that kind of help and insulting imperialism? You know very well that to proceed like that is not to take the primary, decisive measures.

We took another path. We decided to go to face the danger, to take measures that would place

the imperialists of the United States in the dilemma of having to renounce the invasion of Cuba or to unleash thermonuclear war. To defend Cuba we proposed the installation of the missiles. If North American imperialism had unleashed the invasion, no protest of ours, no three-shift, three-week or even three-month demonstration would have stopped them. Only one thing could restrain them: the fear, the knowledge that if they began the invasion, the missiles would carry out their mission and the cities of North America would be left in ruins. We understood that placing such a weapon in Cuba was the most efficient way of defending it during that time.

We considered that Cuba needed the means that would make the United States renounce any armed invasion of the island.

We examined this question several times and we decided to propose the installation of the weapons, you know, serviced by our personnel. We started with the premise that the missiles would be in the hands of Soviet military units. We also want to stick to that system in the future. The aim was for our enemies to hold themselves to the same position, if only for a certain amount of time. It is clear that in the end, West Germany will also, probably, have such a weapon, but we are interested in pushing this into the future.

When this question was decided, we took into account that the imperialists could take advantage of such a step, to use it as a pretext to turn up the heat, to put the world on the brink of war, or even unleash war. And we took decisive steps on behalf of the defense of Cuba, on behalf of the whole socialist camp and of the proletarian solidarity of Marxist-Leninist parties. . . . We understood that our country could see itself dragged into a war in the Caribbean, which would have given the conflict a global character. . . .

These are not resolutions, they are not insults against imperialism, with which one cannot weaken it. As a Byelorussian proverb says: You can insult the master, but with that he only gets fatter. And so it is. You can insult imperialism as much as you like, but that won't make it wither, it won't make it weaker, nor will it diminish its insolence. Imperialism takes into account only real forces. It does not recognize anything else. That is why one can call it a paper tiger, dung, whatever you like; but if you do not let imperialism know that behind those words expressing our indignation there is a force, they will not be stopped by them nor will their insolence and aggressiveness be diminished.

We consider as a real force, in the first place, the economy, when the people are united around their leaders. Only with a firm economic base can you create the necessary weaponry.

We, the socialist countries, appreciate more than anything else the goodness of peace and dedicate all our forces to promote it. But we must never forget the existence of the imperialist camp and its aspirations to strangle the socialist countries. That is why we must observe the proper proportion of expenses, diversify the economy, which is also the fundamental base of military might; but we must do so without skimping on resources to create the most modern armed forces and the most modern equipment, which must be at a necessary level, even more, superior to our enemy's.

Without this, we cannot guarantee peaceful coexistence; without basing oneself on such real premises, it is impossible to safeguard peace worldwide.

Because of this, those who say that we are begging for peace are consciously distorting our position, or they simply do not understand what they're saying. As is said, only God knows what moves them: ill-will or incomprehension.

Some are now daring to slander us, claiming that in resolving the conflict in the Caribbean we guided ourselves exclusively by our own self-serving interests. That is the greatest offense against the Soviet people! . . .

Those who make such statements can only be men who, while calling themselves Marxist-Leninist, do not truly value that title. It is obvious, that while pursuing their own egotistical and adventurist ends, they dare to slander the Soviet Union — the first country to revolt, to build socialism, and to set an unyielding example in the face of the enemy in the fight against its own bourgeoisie and landowners, and a country that now gives the same unyielding example in the fight against imperialism. Doubtless, you know that the Soviet Union has extended, and extends, immense aid, even in weaponry, to peoples fighting for their liberation from imperialism. . . .

As you can see, dear comrade Fidel, I have gotten carried away and am now writing you a very long letter. You will understand, I hope, that I feel the need to do so. As we say among ourselves, among us Russians, one feels the desire to let off steam when talking to a comrade, to a friend, to a brother. Although we are carrying out this conversation at a distance, I'd like this letter to express my feelings. I hope that when you come to our country — and if you want to bring your comrades with you we would be happy — we will have more than one fraternal conversation.

I will not hide from you, it would be senseless to do so, that any imprudent step or even any roughness in our relations could today generate problems. . . . It is possible that under normal conditions, no one would attach any importance to this; but under the conditions that have now been created, I would say that serenity and self-control are necessary. You will understand, as is natural, that we, like you, have reason to be in a good mood. With you, we have stopped an aggressor poised to invade Cuba and, despite the mobilization it carried out, its concentration of immense forces, it did not dare to attack the isle of freedom. We cannot underestimate the aggressive imperialist forces that were ready to attack your republic. Those forces were superior to Cuba's, including our troops on your territory, who, comrade Fidel, would have fought shoulder-to-shoulder with your heroes and, had it been necessary, would have died with them for the cause of the revolution.

When Marshal Malinovsky was asked what Cuba could do to respond to an attack from the United States, he answered frankly, although it was very difficult for him to give this answer: "If we speak of the correlation of forces existing in the Caribbean, and we know what Cuba has at its disposal and we know our capacities there — he said — we could say that, with such a correlation of forces, it is impossible, unfortunately, to hold. And if hostilities start, it is very unlikely that Cuba will be able to resist for long because the forces are so unequal."

It may be that you do not agree with us. We too would have wished that the situation had been different. But, dear friend Fidel, you are a military man, I also spent almost the entire Second World War at the front and took part in the civil war: there is a real correlation of forces and it is impossible to escape it. . . .

But, why did the enemy — the North American aggressor — retreat, renounce the invasion? It is clear that they were not stopped just by the forces of Cuba, including the forty-two medium-range missiles we installed there. The principal thing that stopped North American imperialism was the powerful forces of the Soviet Union; they were deterred by the fact that an attack against Cuba would have meant a world war in which many countries would have been blown up. The United States of North America would have also suffered terrible damages.

As you will understand, we do not want to minimize in the slightest the important role played by the firm decision and willingness of the Cuban people to defend the conquests of the revolution.

This is what stopped the enemy — not the curses and insults against imperialism, not the resolutions. . . . I stress once again that the enemy can only be deterred by effective forces. . . . Even if he is confident of winning, he also has other calculations: he takes into account the colossal losses and understands that such losses, under actual conditions, would reduce his victory to nothing, and that his territories would be left a field strewn with corpses, and contaminated by radioactivity.

It's said that we cannot believe the enemy. We have always held, do hold, and always will hold this position.

It is clear to any Marxist-Leninist that North American imperialism will not renounce its plans to end the socialist regime in Cuba, to abolish the revolutionary order in your country, and to restore capitalism and reaction there. While there are two systems — the socialist one, which is edifying life on the basis of Marxist-Leninist doctrine, and the capitalist one — those systems will be antagonistic, and the struggle between them will not cease; it will not cease until one of the two achieves total victory.

We Marxist-Leninists are profoundly convinced of our victory. . . . Speaking frankly, at this time, there are few hopes of reaching a disarmament agreement.

This last observation does not mean, however, that we should renounce our efforts in the struggle for peace, or replace our slogan in the struggle for disarmament with one for the struggle for rearmament. With such an aim we would neither attract the masses nor be an attractive force for workers and for all friends of peace. If we put at the forefront not the struggle for disarmament but the struggle for the unleashing of war and for the destruction of capitalism through war, instead of through peaceful competition, we would practically be exhorting people to die. People go to their deaths when there is no other way out. Just that — when there is no other way out.

But we do have a way out! We are sure that we are right — and not only of our reason, but also of the possibilities for victory. These possibilities we have proven with the socialist construction in practice, with the very fact of our existence. Forty years ago, the Soviet Union ranked among the lowest of the European countries in terms of economic development; today we hold second place in the world, and by 1970, by what we see, we will be in first. We have also succeeded in making the words “peace” and “socialism” inseparable in the minds of all the peoples in the world.

Does that not encourage us? Should this incite us into adventure, into unleashing a thermonuclear world war? Why should we follow the principle of all or nothing? One acts in this way only when there is no way out. Desperation and pessimism are for imperialist circles. They are the ones who, having lost faith in winning the contest of peaceful competition, can take risks and unleash war; such aggressive forces exist.

But we do not need a world war to achieve the victory of the communist cause. We communists have better prospects; we hold firm convictions, and this certainty is based not in words, but in real facts.

In conditions of peace, socialism deploys to the fullest its forces and demonstrates its advantages in all fields, even in fields as decisive as the powerful growth of the economy, worker productivity, and the material and cultural level of the masses.

On the other hand, peaceful coexistence does not free capitalism from its insoluble

contradictions — it contributes to sharpening the workers' class struggle, of the workers against the exploiters, and contributes to the rise of the national liberation movement.

You may have noticed that the strongest labor conflicts and the national liberation struggles of greatest scope have taken place over the past ten or fifteen years, that is to say, during the period of peaceful coexistence. Under the conditions of peaceful coexistence of nations with different social regimes, democratic revolutions, national liberation revolutions, and socialist revolutions are not only possible but certain, including, of course, the revolutions in Latin America, which Cuba precipitated. That is why we make all efforts to avoid the eruption of a thermonuclear world war. We are not interested in unleashing a war.

But we are ready to carry out a counterstrike. If imperialism tries to liquidate us with war, we can liquidate the imperialist forces and, in this way, end imperialism forever. It will be, as is written in the documents of our Party, in the Communist party program, and in the declaration of fraternal communist parties, the last war ever unleashed by imperialism. . . .

All of this I say from the heart. This is why we would very much like you to come to our country. We have been inviting you to come for some time, but in the recent past events have taken such a course that we ourselves advised you to delay your visit somewhat. Then we worried greatly that North American imperialism could profit from your absence and invade Cuba.

Now we believe — and we are sure of this — that the enemy will not try to take advantage of your absence from the country and your visit to Moscow to attack Cuba. There are, in spite of everything, commitments that the United States of North America has undertaken through the statements of their president. Obviously, one cannot trust them and take it as an absolute guarantee, but neither is it reasonable to ignore them totally. This declaration of the president of the United States is now a kind of international document, registered at the United Nations. The crisis in the area of the Caribbean Sea and the desire of North American imperialism to deploy armed forces in Cuba have become a world crisis. Now your relations with the United States of North America are not simply relations between only two countries, between Cuba and the United States; no, this matter is a global question now. However brazen, the aggressor will be forced to take this into account in some way.

Naturally, imperialism can change its tactics in its struggle to obtain its objectives. It will not renounce the objective it has set itself — fighting against socialism — and this should not surprise us, because we too speak openly of the global victory of socialism. We speak of peaceful coexistence and of the inevitable triumph of communism all over the globe. . . .

We want to reach this great objective in the conditions of peaceful competition. In the atmosphere of peaceful coexistence we are demonstrating the superiority of socialism compared to capitalism and, in this way, we attract more and more the peoples of the capitalist countries to the struggle within each country against the domination of capital — for its defeat, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and for the victory of peace, democracy, and socialism.

As has already been said, peaceful coexistence contributes to the development of the class struggle of the peoples of Latin America, Africa, and Asia, which also changes to a great degree the correlation of forces at the global level in favor of socialism. We have helped, and will help with all means, the peoples in their just struggle against imperialism.

Not long ago, Kennedy assembled all the counter-revolutionary crowd that you expelled from Cuba, along with other scum, and perorated before them, promising the participants of the invasion

to return to Havana the banner they had given him, when another government is in power there. That does not discourage us in the least. You will surely recall that when I was in the United States I told them without evasion that capitalism would be buried. But I said that the gravedigger would be the North American working class. This class will bury North American imperialism on its own.

The Soviet Union does not exclude the possibility of furious action by North American imperialism. It would be stupid not to see the danger. But today, after the acute crisis in the area of the Caribbean Sea, there are reasons to believe that you have won a truce and that you will take advantage of it for peaceful construction. One must use this truce, above all, to expand the economy and agricultural production: this will allow you to improve the people's living standards. It is precisely this revolutionary example of Cuba's that the North American monopolists and imperialists most fear. That is why they want to strangle Cuba.

From this, it seems to us, important tasks can be derived today for the Republic of Cuba. One must concentrate efforts in the development of the economy and culture, in increasing the living standards of the masses. And we, comrade Fidel, are ready to cooperate with you. The Soviet Union is doing, and will do, everything possible to develop this cooperation. This cooperation requires us to give aid to your republic. In making its contribution to strengthening the economy of the Republic of Cuba and its might, the Soviet Union is in no way guided by any self-interested calculations. When we help to strengthen the economy and defense of Cuba, we consider it to be a contribution to the common cause of developing and strengthening revolutionary forces, of strengthening the unity of socialist countries. With joint efforts we open in the new continent the road to a new world, the world of socialism.

Revolutionary Cuba is a brilliant star in the western hemisphere. The more developed its economy and culture, and the higher the material well-being of the Cuban people, the brighter the light of the beacon that attracts the working class, the peasants, and the working intellectuals of Latin American, African, and Asian countries; they are encouraged by the struggle for liberty and for a better life.

These are, comrade Fidel, my sincere judgments.

Now I would like to tell you, comrade Fidel, what the best time, in our opinion, would be for you to come to the Soviet Union. From our point of view, the season of the year is of no great importance. But taking into account the tropical climate of Cuba, and remembering that you felt physically cold in New York, we must also take into account our Russian winter. . . . [I]t might be most convenient for you to come to our country at the beginning of spring, so that you could take part in the May Day festivities.

At another time you wanted to come to the Soviet Union precisely for the First of May, to watch our demonstration and parade. Because of this it would be good if you could come before the First of May so that you could get to know our cities, what we are building, our people. I would gladly travel with you through the country, and accompany you in your travels to certain cities. We could talk during those trips and then we could celebrate the First of May in Moscow, where you could see the parade and the demonstration. . . .

In a word, you choose the time that is most convenient for you. May Day with your participation would be an even more joyous holiday for Muscovites and for all the peoples of the Soviet Union. The popularity of your revolution, and your own personal popularity as leader of the Cuban Revolution, is very high among our peoples. The Soviets value you greatly and admire your revolutionary audacity. The Cuban Revolution has conquered the hearts of our people. You will feel

this heat when you come to our country and meet with the people in any place: in the city, in the factory, the Kolkhoz and Sovkhoz, in every place you go.

I will not hide from you, comrade Fidel, that I myself had great desires to make a trip to Cuba.

...

I thought that after ending this tension I could go see you in Cuba. But circumstances are such that, as far as I can see, I should not go. We have reached that conclusion because it could be falsely interpreted in your country and in other countries. Many will ask: Why is Khrushchev going to Cuba if comrade Mikoyan has just been there? Mikoyan's visit was interpreted in a twisted way in some countries, even in some socialist countries. And if, after this, Khrushchev shows up over there, they will say that obviously the relations between the Soviet Union and Cuba have become such that Khrushchev's visit was necessary.

Now, I reaffirm my great wishes to go to your country if you invite me. I'm sure that such a trip would be advantageous. But we will talk about that when you come to the Soviet Union, and together we can select the time of my visit to Cuba. . . .

Please accept, comrade Fidel, cordial communist greetings on behalf of my comrades and myself.

January 31, 1963

N. Khrushchev