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Summary of points made by Dr. Fidel Castro at  
lunch at the British Embassy Residence, Havana  
on July 10, 1963

Relations with the United Kingdom

When the Ambassador mentioned Castro's references to his readiness to discuss compensation for expropriated American property, Castro took the point at once and immediately said that this applied to British property also. He would like to see a realistic agreement with us over this related to Cuba's capacity to pay. The question of railway pensioners and other personal cases might also be considered. He would also like to see expansion in trade. He recognized that the balance of trade with the United Kingdom was at present in Cuba's favour but there had sometimes been difficulties over goods which Cuba wanted to buy in Britain. A contract to buy six bulldozers for instance, had fallen through, presumably for political reasons. There was another case where Cuba had wanted to buy machinery for a factory but found that it could not be brought into operation because a very small part, of American manufacture, could not be supplied. Perhaps all these problems could be discussed together. Inevitably, in the early days of the Revolution, there had been excesses but they had now advanced beyond this phase. He was anxious to prove that the Cuban Revolutionary Government was serious and that its word could be trusted.

2. He now realised that the Revolutionary Government had made a mistake in the past by failing to cultivate close relations with the Western missions. He was anxious to put this right. He was sorry that Sir Herbert Marchant was now leaving Cuba but he hoped that he would be able to have the same friendly relationship with his successor and he looked forward to working with him for improved relations between Cuba and Britain.

Relations with the United States

3. The latest American measures freezing Cuban assets in American banks and prohibiting financial transactions between the United States and Cuba, were of no importance economically but they had a political significance. They showed that the Americans were still bent on a course of hostility and aggression. There were countless examples of this. In the arrangements for the delivery of medical supplies in exchange for the release of prisoners, they had tried to go back unilaterally on the agreements and had delayed the arrival of the last ship load. (Vallejo added that \$10 million worth of the supplies were still outstanding.)

4. American policy towards Cuba had been a succession of errors. Their open hostility, for example, had only damaged their own reputation throughout Latin America and increased sympathy for Cuba. Their encouragement of emigration to the United States had done the Cuban revolution the service of removing from Cuba the social class that was out of sympathy with the revolution. In this respect, Cuba had been more fortunate than the countries of Eastern Europe. American measures to discourage Western shipping had obliged the Russians to increase their own merchant fleet to the disadvantage of other maritime countries. Some 280 ships were now being

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