

Speech of the Commander of the Northern Fleet, Admiral KASATONOV V.A., delivered at the reception in honor of Fidel Castro during his stay at the Northern Fleet.

Comrades, we are proud to welcome dear guests to our warship - Hero of the Cuban people, Comrade Fidel Castro Ruz, and an outstanding leader of our Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan.

Dear Comrade Fidel Castro! Dear Cuban friends! Comrades! On behalf of the Soviet Navy servicemen, on behalf of the sailors of the Northern Fleet, we warmly and fraternally welcome aboard a Soviet military ship our esteemed guests - the leader of the Cuban people, dear Fidel Castro, and those accompanying him.

The Soviet people, our Party, our dear Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev constantly take care of the Navy. Our fleet is a powerful ocean fleet, equipped with first-class weapons and combat equipment to give a crushing rebuff to the aggressor in any naval theater of operations if necessary.

Soviet soldiers are strong in their high morale, their combat traditions, and their unwavering loyalty to the Communist Party created by the immortal great Lenin.

The wonderful traditions of Soviet sailors are friendship and camaraderie, readiness to fulfill their international duty at any moment, and to come to the aid of a friend.

In the tense days of autumn of last year, when a threat hung over the Island of Freedom, over your remarkable homeland, when ominous clouds of war gathered over the world, the Soviet Armed Forces, and with them our Navy, were brought to the highest state of combat readiness.

We were filled with determination, by order of our Government, by the command of military duty, by the call of friendship, to come to your aid.

Your heroic homeland is far from our shores. Seas and oceans separate us, but we sailors know well that the sea separates enemies and brings friends together. We are with you, our dear Cuban brothers.

Allow me to propose a toast to the heroic Cuban people, to the further successes of the Cuban Republic in the construction of socialism.

To the leader of the Cuban people, Fidel Castro!

To the health of our Cuban friends present here!

To the eternal and unbreakable friendship of the Soviet and Cuban peoples!

Transmitted by member of the Military Council of the Northern Fleet, Rear Admiral Sizov

Received by Dementyev

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Speech by F. Castro at the cocktail party on 28/04

on the rocket carrier "Zhguchiy" in Severomorsk

Our stay in Murmansk ends with a visit to this naval base. The toast that was just given here on behalf of the Soviet Navy made a huge impression on us.

Here, we were able to witness the power of modern Soviet military technology, the strong discipline, and the high moral spirit of Soviet sailors. Here we deeply felt how great is the solidarity of the Soviet people with Cuba, how great is the friendship of the Soviet Union with Cuba.

We know about the revolutionary traditions of the Soviet Navy. We know that revolutionary sailors were together with workers and peasants in the heroic days of the October Revolution. We know two characteristic features that distinguish Soviet sailors. These are their remarkable combat and revolutionary traditions.

Here, I felt the revolutionary spirit of the crew of the "Avrora". Here, I felt the strength and courage of Soviet sailors.

We know that in the difficult and critical days of the Caribbean crisis, the Soviet Navy, like other branches of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, was brought to combat readiness and was ready to respond to any aggression.

When we see the power of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, we think about those enormous efforts and sacrifices that imperialists force the Soviet people to make. We think about the bitter necessity of exerting great efforts for defense because imperialism exists. We need to be strong to prevent war, so that the enemy would never dare to attack us, so that the ideals of all peoples - the ideals of peace - would triumph on earth.

I propose a toast to the Soviet Navy!

Recorded by Comrade Chigir.

[Source: State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF)]

Translated by Alexey Chernyavskiy for the National Security Archive]