

Seven Speeches

Building Socialism in Cuba

Fidel Castro

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Introduction

By Dave Holmes

During his long political career, Fidel Castro (1926-2016), the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, must surely have delivered thousands of speeches. This collection presents just seven of them but they are representative of his style and approach. They also give us a vivid picture of what a socialist revolutionary process means and the myriad problems it must necessarily confront.

The first item is the Second Declaration of Havana, a powerful response to the 1962 US-engineered expulsion of Cuba from the Organisation of American States (OAS). Presented by Fidel to a huge rally in Havana this manifesto outlines the horrendous effects of US imperialism on Latin America's development and explains why Washington wants to crush the Cuban Revolution. The Declaration is also a stirring call to arms.

Apart from the first and last items, this collection deals with various issues of building socialism in Cuba.

Two speeches, both from March 1962, deal with the problem of sectarianism in the vital process of uniting the various strands of the Cuban revolutionary forces into a single authoritative organisation, essential to mobilise the masses for the struggles ahead.

Fidel's broadside against Aníbal Escalante's bureaucratic manoeuvring in the nascent Integrated Revolutionary Organisation (ORI) was a decisive blow to this early attempt to turn the revolutionary party into a Stalinist top-down type of outfit.

Fidel's 1970 speech to the trade union congress takes up the question of how to develop revolutionary discipline in the workplace, a necessity if the country was to overcome the ravages of imperialism. A big problem was the small minority of workers who shirked and loafed on the job but were happy to accept all the benefits of the revolution. An "anti-loafing law" was discussed as a key tool in a big educational effort to combat the problem.

Achieving full equality for women was a key task of the revolution. Fidel's 1974

speech to the Federation of Cuban Women outlines the huge gains that had been achieved in 15 years of struggle and the problems still to be addressed.

In 1986 Cuba embarked on the “Campaign of Rectification of Errors and Negative Tendencies”. It aimed to make political education and appeals to consciousness the key elements in motivating people. Financial incentives can only be auxiliary means, inescapable as they were in the sphere of material production. The title of Fidel’s speech says it all: “A communist spirit will always be more powerful than money!”

Finally, we have included Fidel’s address to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Brief though it was, it powerfully cut through to the decisive issues involved with global warming and climate change and had a big impact on those attending.

As we write, the Cuban Revolution is facing its greatest challenge since 1959. A combination of a tightening of the criminal US blockade, COVID-19 and the consequent collapse of the tourist industry, have left Cuba without enough foreign currency to pay for its essential imports. Washington scents blood and is trying to foment popular discontent.

International solidarity is vital. A study of Fidel’s speeches can remind us of what the Cuban Revolution has achieved and what it represents, and why we should refute the imperialist slanders and defend it to the end.

Throughout, subheads have been added by the editors for ease of reading.

September 2021



Fidel speaking to huge crowd in Havana, May 1, 1962.

The Second Declaration of Havana

In January 1962, under US pressure, the Organisation of American States, meeting at Punta del Este in Uruguay, voted to exclude Cuba from that body. On February 4, almost a million Cubans rallied in Havana to protest the OAS decision. Premier Fidel Castro presented the following stirring manifesto to the gathering.



On May 18, 1895, on the eve of his death from a Spanish bullet through the heart, Jose Marti, apostle of our independence, said in an unfinished letter to his friend Manuel Mercado:

“Now I am able to write ... I am in danger each day now of giving my life for my country and for my obligation ... to prevent before it's too late through achieving Cuba's independence the United States from extending its control over the Antilles and consequently falling with that much more force upon our countries of America. Whatever I have done till now, and whatever I shall do, has been with that aim ...

No annexation

“The people most vitally concerned with preventing the imperialist annexation of Cuba, which would make Cuba the starting point of that course — which must be blocked and which we are blocking with our blood — of annexation of our American nations to the violent and brutal North which despises them, are being hindered by lesser and public commitments from the open and avowed espousal of this sacrifice, which is being made for our and their benefit.

“I have lived inside the monster and know its guts; and my sling is the sling of David.”

In 1895, Marti already pointed out the danger hovering over America and called imperialism by its name: imperialism. He pointed out to the people of Latin America that more than anyone, they had a stake in seeing that Cuba did not succumb to the

greed of the Yankee, scornful of the peoples of Latin America. And with his own blood, shed for Cuba and America, he wrote the words which posthumously, in homage to his memory, the people of Cuba place at the head of this declaration.

Humiliation

Sixty-seven years have passed. Puerto Rico was converted into a colony and is still a colony saturated with military bases. Cuba also fell into the clutches of imperialism. Their troops occupied our territory. The Platt Amendment was imposed on our first constitution, as a humiliating clause which sanctioned the odious right of foreign intervention. Our riches passed into their hands, our history was falsified, our government and our politics were entirely molded in the interests of the overseers; the nation was subjected to 60 years of political, economic, and cultural suffocation.

But Cuba rose, Cuba was able to redeem itself from the bastard guardianship. Cuba broke the chains which tied its fortunes to those of the imperialist oppressor, redeemed its riches, reclaimed its culture, and unfurled its banner as the Free Territory of America.

Now the United States will never again be able to use Cuba's strength against America, but conversely, dominating the majority of the other Latin American states, the United States is attempting to use the strength of America against Cuba.

What is the history of Cuba but the history of Latin America? And what is the history of Latin America but the history of Asia, Africa, and Oceania? And what is the history of all these peoples but the history of the most pitiless and cruel exploitation by imperialism throughout the world?

At the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, a handful of economically developed nations had finished partitioning the world among themselves, subjecting to its economic and political domination two-thirds of humanity, which was thus forced to work for

Privileged position

The historical circumstances which permitted certain European countries and the United States of America to attain a high level of industrial development placed them in a position to subject the rest of the world to their domination and exploitation.

What motives compelled the expansion of the industrial powers? Were they moral motives? Was it a matter of "civilising", as they claimed? No: They were economic reasons.

Since the discovery of America, which hurled the European conquerors across the seas to occupy and exploit the lands and inhabitants of other continents, the fundamental motive for their conduct was the desire for riches. The discovery of

America itself was carried out in search of shorter routes to the Orient whose goods were highly paid for in Europe.

A new social class, the merchants and the producers of manufactured articles for commerce, arose from the womb of the feudal society of lords and serfs in the decline of the Middle Ages.

The thirst for gold was the motive which spurred the efforts of that new class. The desire for gain was the incentive for its conduct throughout history. With the growth of manufacturing and commerce, its social influence also grew. The productive forces which were developing in the womb of feudal society clashed more and more with the relationships of servitude characteristic of feudalism, with its laws, its institutions, its philosophy, its morality, its art, and its political ideology.

New philosophical and political ideas, new concepts of right and of the state were proclaimed by the intellectual representatives of the bourgeoisie, which — because they responded to the new necessities of social life — gradually entered into the consciousness of the exploited masses. They were then revolutionary ideas opposed to those outworn ideas of feudal society. The peasants, the artisans, the workers, led by the bourgeoisie, overthrew the feudal order, its philosophy, its ideas, its institutions, its laws, and the privileges of the ruling class, that is, the hereditary nobility.

Change of mind

At that time, the bourgeoisie considered revolution necessary and just. It did not think that the feudal order could and should be eternal as it now thinks of its capitalist social order.

It encouraged the peasants to free themselves from feudal servitude, it turned the artisans against the medieval guilds, and demanded the right to political power. The absolute monarchs, the nobility, and the high clergy stubbornly defended their class privileges, proclaiming the divine right of kings and the immutability of the social order. To be liberal then, to proclaim the ideas of Voltaire, Diderot, or Jean Jacques Rousseau, spokesmen for bourgeois philosophy, constituted in the eyes of the ruling classes as serious a crime as it does today in the eyes of the bourgeoisie to be a socialist and to proclaim the ideas of Marx, Engels, and Lenin.

When the bourgeoisie took political power and established its capitalist mode of production on the ruins of feudal society, it was on this mode of production it erected its state, its laws, its ideas, and institutions. Those institutions sanctified, in the first instance, the essence of class rule: private property.

The new society based on the private ownership of the means of production and free competition was thus divided into two basic classes: one, the owner of the means

of production, ever more modern and efficient; the other, deprived of all wealth, possessing only its labour power, of necessity sold this labour power in the market as another piece of merchandise, simply in order to live.

Productive forces

With the feudal bonds broken, the productive forces developed extraordinarily. Great factories arose in which greater and greater numbers of workers were utilised.

The most modern and technically efficient factories continually drove from the market the less efficient competitors. The cost of industrial equipment continually rose. It became necessary to accumulate more and more capital. A greater portion of production passed into a smaller number of hands. Thus arose the great capitalist enterprises and later, according to the degree and character of the association, the great industrial combines through cartels, syndicates, trusts, and corporations, controlled by the owners of the major portion of the stock, that is to say, by the most powerful heads of industry. Free competition, characteristic of capitalism in its first phase, gave way to monopolies which entered into agreements among themselves and controlled the markets.

Exploitation

Where did the colossal quantity of resources come from which permitted a handful of monopolists to accumulate billions of dollars? Simply from the exploitation of human labour. Millions of men, forced to work for subsistence wages, produced with their strength the gigantic capital of the monopolies. From the workers came the fortunes of the privileged classes, ever richer, ever more powerful. Through the banking institutions, these classes were able to make use, not only of their own money, but that of all society. Thus was brought about the fusion of the banks with giant industry, and finance capital was born. What should they do with the great surplus of capital which was accumulating in ever greater quantities? Invade the world with it. Always in pursuit of profit, they began to seize the natural resources of all the economically weak countries and to exploit the human labour of the inhabitants, paying even more wretched wages than they were forced to pay to the workers of their own developed countries. Thus, began the territorial and economic division of the world. By 1914, eight or ten imperialist countries had subjugated territories beyond their own borders, covering more than 83,700,000 square kilometers, with a population of 970,000,000 inhabitants. They had simply divided up the world.

But as the world was limited in size and already divided down to the last corner of the earth, a clash ensued among the different monopolistic nations and struggles grew

for new divisions, struggles originating in the disproportionate distribution of industrial and economic power which the various monopolistic nations had attained in their uneven development. Imperialist wars broke out which would cost humanity fifty million dead, tens of millions wounded and the destruction of incalculable material and cultural wealth. Even before this had happened, Karl Marx wrote that “capital comes into the world dripping from head to foot through every pore with blood and mire”.

The capitalist system of production, once it had given all of which it was capable, became an abysmal obstacle to the progress of humanity. But from its origins, the bourgeoisie carried within itself its contradiction. In its womb gigantic productive instruments were developed, but with time a new and vigorous social force developed: the proletariat. The proletariat which was destined to change the old and worn out social system of capitalism into a superior socioeconomic form in accordance with the historic possibilities of human society, by converting into social property those gigantic means of production which the people, and none but the people, had created and amassed by their work. At such a state of development, the productive forces made completely anachronistic and outmoded the regime which stood for private ownership and the economic subordination of millions and millions of human beings to the dictates of a small social minority.

Rapacious wars

The interests of humanity cried out for a halt to the anarchy of capitalist production; for a halt to the waste, the economic crises, and the rapacious wars which are part of the capitalist system. The growing necessities of the human race and the possibility of satisfying them demanded the planned development of the economy and the rational utilisation of means of production and natural resources.

It was inevitable that imperialism and colonialism would fall into a profound and insoluble crisis. The general crisis began with the outbreak of World War I, with the revolution of the workers and peasants which overthrew the tsarist empire of Russia and founded, amidst the most difficult conditions of capitalist encirclement and aggression, the world's first socialist state, opening a new era in the history of humanity. From that time on, the crisis and decomposition of the imperialist system has incessantly worsened.

Imperialist powers

World War II, unleashed by the imperialist powers —and into which were dragged the Soviet Union and other criminally invaded peoples of Asia and Europe, who

engaged in a bloody struggle of liberation — culminated in the defeat of fascism, formation of the worldwide socialist camp and the struggle of the colonial and dependent peoples for their sovereignty. Between 1945 and 1957, more than 1.2 billion human beings gained their independence in Asia and Africa. The blood shed by the people was not in vain.

The movement of the dependent and colonial peoples is a phenomenon of universal character which agitates the world and marks the final crisis of imperialism.

Cuba and Latin America are part of the world. Our problems form part of the problems engendered by the general crisis of imperialism and the struggle of the subjugated peoples — the clash between the world that is being born and the world that is dying. The odious and brutal campaign unleashed against our nation expresses the desperate, as well as futile, effort which the imperialists are making to prevent the liberation of the people. Cuba hurts the imperialists in a special way.

What is it that is hidden behind the Yankee's hatred of the Cuban Revolution? What is it that rationally explains the conspiracy which unites, for the same aggressive purpose, the most powerful and richest imperialist power in the modern world and the oligarchies of an entire continent, which together are supposed to represent a population of 350 million human beings, against a small country of only seven million inhabitants, economically underdeveloped, without financial or military means to threaten the security or economy of any other country? What unites them and stirs them up in fear? What explains it is fear. Not fear of the Cuban Revolution but fear of the Latin American revolution. Not fear of the workers, peasants, intellectuals, students, and progressive sectors of the middle strata which, by revolutionary means, have taken power in Cuba; but fear that the workers, peasants, students, intellectuals, and progressive sectors of the middle strata will, by revolutionary means, take power in the oppressed and hungry countries exploited by the Yankee monopolies and reactionary oligarchies of America; fear that the plundered people of the continent will seize the arms from the oppressors and, like Cuba, declare themselves free people of America.

Spectre of Cuba

By crushing the Cuban Revolution, they hope to dispel the fear that torments them, the spectre of the revolution that threatens them. By liquidating the Cuban Revolution, they hope to liquidate the revolutionary spirit of the people. They imagine in their delirium that Cuba is an exporter of revolutions. In their sleepless merchants' and usurers' minds there is the idea that revolutions can be bought, sold, rented, loaned, exported, and imported like some piece of merchandise. Ignorant of the objective

laws that govern the development of human societies, they believe that their monopolistic, capitalistic, and semifeudal regimes are eternal. Educated in their own reactionary ideology, a mixture of superstition, ignorance, subjectivism, pragmatism, and other mental aberrations, they have an image of the world and of the march of history conforming to their interests as exploiting classes.

They imagine that revolutions are born or die in the brains of individuals or are caused by divine laws, and, moreover, that the gods are on their side. They have always thought that way — from the devout patrician pagans of Roman slave society who hurled the early Christians to the lions at the circus, and the inquisitors of the Middle Ages who, as guardians of feudalism and absolute monarchy, burned at the stake the first representatives of the liberal thought of the nascent bourgeoisie, up to today's bishops who anathematise proletarian revolutions in defence of the bourgeois and monopolist regime.

All reactionary classes in all historical epochs, when the antagonism between exploiters and exploited reaches its highest peak, presaging the arrival of a new social regime, have turned to the worst weapons of repression and calumny against their adversaries. The primitive Christians were taken to their martyrdom accused of burning Rome and of sacrificing children on their altars. Philosophers like Giordano Bruno, reformers like Hus, and thousands of others who did not conform with the feudal order, were accused of heresy and taken by the inquisitors to be burned at the stake.

Persecution

Today, persecution rages over the proletarian fighters, and this crime brings out the worst calumnies in the monopolistic and bourgeois press. Always, in each historical period, the ruling classes have committed murder — invoking the “defence of society, order, country — “their” society of privileged minorities and exploited majorities, “their” class rule, maintained by blood and fire against the dispossessed; “the country”, whose fruits only they enjoy, depriving the rest of the people of those fruits, in order to suppress the revolutionaries who aspire to a new society, a just order, a country truly for all.

The march of humanity

But the evolution of history, the upward march of humanity is not held back, nor can it be held back. The forces which impel the people, who are the real makers of history, forces determined by the material conditions of existence and aspirations to higher goals of wellbeing and liberty, forces which surge forth when man's progress in the fields of science, technology, and culture make it possible, are superior to the will and

the terror unleashed by the ruling oligarchies.

The subjective conditions of each country — that is, the consciousness, organisation, leadership — can accelerate or retard the revolution, according to their greater or lesser degree of development, but sooner or later, in each historical period, when the objective conditions mature, consciousness is acquired, the organisation is formed, the leadership emerges, and the revolution takes place.

Whether this takes place peacefully or in painful birth does not depend on the revolutionaries, it depends on the reactionary forces of the old society who resist the birth of the new society engendered by the contradictions carried in the womb of the old society. The revolution is in history like the doctor who assists at the birth of a new life. It does not use the tools of force needlessly, but will use them without hesitation whenever necessary to help the birth, a birth which brings to the enslaved and exploited masses the hope of a new and better life.

Today in many countries of Latin America revolution is inevitable. That fact is not determined by anyone's will. It is determined by the horrifying conditions of exploitation in which American man lives, by the development of the revolutionary consciousness of the masses, by the world crisis of imperialism and the universal movement of struggle among subjugated peoples.

The anxiety felt today is an unmistakable symptom of rebellion. The very depths of a continent are profoundly moved, a continent which has witnessed four centuries of slave, semislave and feudal exploitation, beginning with its aboriginal inhabitants and the slaves brought from Africa, up to the national nuclei which emerged later: white, black, mulatto, mestizo, and Indian. Today they are made brothers by scorn, humiliation, and the Yankee yoke, and are brothers in their hope for a better tomorrow.

Exploitation remained

The peoples of America liberated themselves from Spanish colonialism at the beginning of the last century, but they did not free themselves from exploitation. The feudal landowners assumed the authority of the Spanish rulers, the Indians continued in painful servitude, the Latin American man in one form or another, continued to be a slave, and the minimum hopes of the people gave way under the power of the oligarchies and the yoke of foreign capital. This has been the truth of America — in one coloration or another, in one variation or another. Today Latin America lies beneath an imperialism, much more fierce, much more powerful, and more cruel than the Spanish colonial empire.

What is the attitude of Yankee imperialism to the objective reality of the historically inexorable Latin American revolution? To prepare to wage a colonial war against the

peoples of Latin America; to create an apparatus of force, the political pretexts and the pseudolegal instruments subscribed to by the reactionary oligarchies, to repress with blood and fire the struggle of the Latin American peoples.

Intervention

The intervention of the government of the United States in the internal politics of Latin American countries has become more open and unbridled each time.

The Inter-American Defence Council, for example, has been and is the nest where the most reactionary and pro-Yankee officers of the Latin American armies are trained to serve later as shock troops in the service of the monopolies.

The North American military missions in Latin America constitute a permanent apparatus of espionage in each nation, directly tied to the Central Intelligence Agency, inculcating in those officers the most reactionary sentiments and trying to convert the armies into instruments of its own political and economic interests.

Presently, in the Panama Canal Zone, the North America high command has organised special courses to train Latin American officers to fight revolutionary guerrillas, with the aim of repressing the armed action of the peasant masses against the feudal exploitation to which they are subjected.

In the United States itself the Central Intelligence Agency has organised special schools to train Latin American agents in the most subtle forms of assassination; and in the Yankee military services the physical liquidation of the anti-imperialist leaders is an accepted policy.

It is notorious that the Yankee embassies in the different Latin American countries are organising, instructing, and equipping fascist bands to spread terror and to attack labour, student, and intellectual organisations. These bands, into which they recruit the sons of the oligarchies, lumpen, and people of the lowest moral character, have already perpetrated a series of aggressive acts against the mass movements.

Santo Domingo

Nothing is more evident and unequivocal about the intentions of imperialism than its recent conduct in the events in Santo Domingo. Without any kind of justification, without even making use of diplomatic relations with that republic, the United States, after stationing its warships before the Dominican capital, declared with its usual arrogance that if Balaguer's government sought military aid, it would land troops in Santo Domingo to quell the insurgence of the Dominican people. That Balaguer's power was absolutely spurious, that each sovereign country of Latin America should have the right to resolve its internal problems without foreign intervention, that there

exist international norms and world opinions, that there even exists an OAS, did not count at all in the considerations of the United States.

What did count were its designs for holding back the Dominican revolution, for its reinstating its odious policy of landing Marines, with no more basis or prerequisite for establishing this new piratical concept of law than a tyrannical, illegitimate, crisis-ridden ruler's simple request. The significance of this should not escape the peoples of Latin America. In Latin America there are more than enough rulers who are ready to use Yankee troops against their own people when they find themselves in crisis.

US policy

North American imperialism's declared policy of sending soldiers to fight against the revolutionary movement of any country in Latin America, that is, to kill workers, students, peasants, Latin American men and women, has no other objective than the continued maintenance of its monopolistic interests and the privileges of the traitorous oligarchies which support it.

It can now be clearly seen that the military pacts signed by the government of the United States with Latin American governments — often secret pacts and always behind the backs of the people — invoking hypothetical foreign dangers which did not exist, had the sole and exclusive object of preventing the struggle of the people; they were pacts against the people, against the only danger — the internal danger of the liberation movements that would imperil Yankee interests. It was not without reason that the people asked themselves: Why so many military agreements? Why the shipments of arms which, even though technically outmoded for modern war, are nevertheless efficient for smashing strikes, repressing popular demonstrations, staining the land with blood? Why the military missions, the pact of Rio de Janeiro and the thousand and one international conferences?

Since the end of World War II, the nations of Latin America have been impoverished more and more, their exports have less and less value, their imports cost more, the per capita income falls, the awful rate of infant mortality does not decrease, the number of illiterates is higher, the people lack jobs, land, adequate housing, schools, hospitals, means of communication, and means of life. On the other hand, North American investments exceed \$10 billion. Latin America, moreover, provides cheap raw materials, and is the buyer of expensive finished articles. The United States trades with Latin America like the first Spanish conquerors, who bartered mirrors and trinkets for gold and silver. To guard that torrent of riches, to gain over more control of Latin America's resources and to exploit its suffering peoples — that is what is hidden behind the military pacts, the military missions, and Washington's

diplomatic lobbying.

Strangulation

This policy of gradual strangulation of the sovereignty of the Latin American nations, and of a free hand to intervene in their internal affairs, culminated in the recent meeting of foreign ministers at Punta del Este. Yankee imperialism gathered the ministers together to wrest from them — through political pressure and unprecedented economic blackmail in collusion with a group of the most discredited rulers of this continent — the renunciation of the national sovereignty of our peoples and the consecration of the odious Yankee right to intervention in the internal affairs of Latin America; the submission of the peoples completely to the will of the United States of North America, against which all our great men, from Bolivar to Sandino, fought. Neither the government of the United States, nor the representatives of the exploiting oligarchies, nor the big reactionary press, in the pay of the monopolies and feudal lords, concealed this, but openly demanded agreements which constituted formal suppression of the right of selfdetermination of our peoples; abolishing it with a stroke of the pen at the most infamous conspiracy in the memory of this continent.

Behind closed doors, in repugnant and unlawful meetings, the Yankee minister of colonies dedicated entire days to beating down the resistance and scruples of some ministers, bringing into play the millions of the Yankee treasury in an undisguised buying and selling of votes. A handful of representatives of the oligarchies (of countries which together barely add up to a third of the continent's population) imposed agreements that served up to the Yankee master on a silver platter, the head of a principle which cost the blood of all our countries since the wars of independence. The Pyrrhic character of such sad and fraudulent deeds of imperialism, their moral failure, the broken unanimity, and the universal scandal do not diminish the grave danger which agreements imposed at such a price have brought so close to the peoples of Latin America. At that evil conclave Cuba's thundering voice was raised without weakness or fear, to indict, before all the peoples of America and the world, the monstrous attempt, and to defend with a virility and dignity which will be clear in the annals of history, not only Cuba's rights but the deserted rights of all our sister nations of the American Continent. The word of Cuba could find no echo in that housebroken majority, but neither could it find a refutation; only impotent silence greeted its demolishing arguments and the clearness and courage of its words. But Cuba did not speak for the ministers, Cuba spoke for the people and for history, where its words will be echoed and answered.

At Punta del Este a great ideological battle unfolded between the Cuban Revolution

and Yankee imperialism. Who did they represent there, for whom did each speak? Cuba represented the people; the United States represented the monopolies. Cuba spoke for America's exploited masses; the United States for the exploiting, oligarchical, and imperialist interests; Cuba for sovereignty; the United States for intervention; Cuba for the nationalisation of foreign enterprises; the United States for new investments of foreign capital. Cuba for culture; the United States for ignorance. Cuba for agrarian reform; the United States for great landed estates. Cuba for the industrialisation of America; the United States for underdevelopment. Cuba for creative work; the United States for sabotage and counter-revolutionary terror practiced by its agents — the destruction of sugarcane fields and factories, the bombing by their pirate planes of the labour of a peaceful people. Cuba for the murdered teachers; the United States for the assassins. Cuba for bread; the United States for hunger. Cuba for equality; the United States for privilege and discrimination. Cuba for the truth; the United States for lies. Cuba for liberation; the United States for oppression. Cuba for the bright future of humanity; the United States for the past without hope. Cuba for the heroes who fell at Giron to save the country from foreign domination; the United States for mercenaries and traitors who serve the foreigner against their country. Cuba for peace among peoples; the United States for aggression and war. Cuba for socialism; the United States for capitalism.

Shameful methods

The agreements obtained by the United States through methods so shameful that the entire world criticises them, do not diminish but increase the morality and justice of Cuba's stand, which exposes the sellout and treason of the oligarchies to the national interests and shows the people the road to liberation. It reveals the corruption of the exploiting classes for whom their representatives spoke at Punta del Este. The OAS was revealed for what it really is — a Yankee Ministry of Colonies, a military alliance, an apparatus of repression against the liberation movements of the Latin American peoples.

Cuba has lived three years of the Revolution under the incessant harassment of Yankee intervention in our internal affairs. Pirate airplanes coming from the United States, dropping incendiaries, have burned millions of *arrobas* [an *arroba* = 9.5kg] of sugar cane; acts of international sabotage perpetrated by Yankee agents, like the explosion of the ship *La Coubre*, have cost dozens of Cuban lives; thousands of North American weapons have been dropped by parachute by the US military services onto our territory to promote subversion; hundreds of tons of explosive materials and bombs have been secretly landed on our coast from North American launches to

promote sabotage and terrorism; a Cuban worker was tortured on the naval base of Guantanamo and deprived of his life with no due process before or any explanation later; our sugar quota was abruptly cut and an embargo proclaimed on parts and raw materials for factories and North American construction machinery in order to ruin our economy. Cuban ports and installations have been surpriseattacked by armed ships and bombers from bases prepared by the United States. Mercenary troops, organised and trained in countries of Central America by the same government, have in a warlike manner invaded our territories, escorted by ships of the Yankee fleet and with aerial support from foreign bases, causing much loss of life as well as material wealth; counter-revolutionary Cubans are being trained in the US army and new plans of aggression against Cuba are being made. All this has been going on incessantly for three years, before the eyes of the whole continent — and the OAS was not aware of it.

The ministers meet in Punta del Este and do not even admonish the US government nor the governments who are material accomplices to these aggressions. They expel Cuba, the Latin American victim, the aggrieved nation.

The United States has military pacts with nations of all the continents; military blocs with whatever fascist, militarist, and reactionary government there is in the world: NATO, SEATO and CENTO, to which we now have to add the OAS; it intervenes in Laos, in Viet Nam, in Korea, in Formosa, in Berlin. It openly sends ships to Santo Domingo in order to impose its law, its will, and announces its proposal to use its NATO allies to block commerce with Cuba. And the OAS is not aware! The ministers meet and expel Cuba, which has no military pacts with any country. Thus the government that organises subversion throughout the world and forges military alliances on four continents, forces the expulsion of Cuba, accusing her of no less than subversion and having ties beyond the continent

Cuba's record

Cuba, the Latin American nation which has made landowners of more than 100,000 small farmers, provided year-round employment on state farms and cooperatives to all agricultural workers, transformed forts into schools, given 70,000 scholarships to university, secondary, and technological students, created lecture halls for the entire child population, totally liquidated illiteracy, quadrupled medical services, nationalised foreign interests, suppressed the abusive system which turned housing into a means of exploiting people, virtually eliminated unemployment, suppressed discrimination due to race or sex, ridded itself of gambling, vice, and administrative corruption, armed the people, made the enjoyment of human rights a living reality by freeing man

and woman from exploitation, lack of culture, and social inequality, which has liberated itself from all foreign tutelage, acquired full sovereignty, and established the foundations for the development of its economy in order to no longer be a country producing only one crop and exporting only raw materials, is expelled from the Organisation of American States by governments which have not achieved for their people one of these objectives. How will they be able to justify their conduct before the peoples of the America and the world? How will they be able to deny that in their concept the policy of land, of bread, of work, of health, of liberty, of equality, of culture, of accelerated development of the economy, of national dignity, of full selfdetermination and sovereignty, is incompatible with the hemisphere?

The people think very differently, the people think that the only thing incompatible with the destiny of Latin America is misery, feudal exploitation, illiteracy, starvation wages, unemployment, the policy of repression against the masses of workers, peasants, and students, discrimination against women, Negroes, Indians, mestizos, oppression by the oligarchies, the plundering of their wealth by the Yankee monopolists, the moral stagnation of their intellectuals and artists, the ruin of the small producers of foreign competition, economic underdevelopment, peoples without roads, without hospitals, without housing, without schools, without industries, the submission to imperialism, the renunciation of national sovereignty, and the betrayal of the country.

How justify?

How can the imperialists make understood their conduct and condemnatory attitude toward Cuba? With what words and what arguments are they going to speak to those whom, all the while exploiting, they ignored for so long?

Those who study the problems of America are accustomed to ask: what country has concentrated upon — for the purpose of remedying — the situation of the idle, the poor, the Indians, the Blacks, and the helpless infants, this immense number of infants — 30 million in 1950 (which will be 50 million in eight more years). Yes, what country?

Thirty-two million Indians — like the Andes mountains — form the backbone of the entire American continent. It is clear that for those who considered the Indian more as a thing than a person, this mass of humanity does not count, did not count and, they thought, never would count. Of course, since they were considered a brute labour force, they had to be used like a yoke of oxen or a tractor.

How — under what oath — could anyone believe in any benefit, in any “Alliance for Progress” with imperialism, when under its saintly protection, its killings, its persecutions, the natives of the South of the continent, like those of Patagonia, still live under strips of canvas as did their ancestors at the time the discoverers came almost

500 years ago? Where are those great races which populated northern Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia, such as the Guarani who were savagely decimated, hunted like animals, and buried in the depths of the jungle? Where is that reservoir of indigenous stock — whose extinction is continually hastened — which could have served as a base for a great American civilisation? Across the Paraguayan swamps and desolate Bolivian highlands, deeper into itself, America has driven these primitive, melancholy races, brutalised by alcohol and narcotics to which they became addicted in order at least to survive in the subhuman conditions (not only of nutrition) in which they live. Where does a chain of hands stretch out almost in vain, yet still stretching out across centuries, over the Andean peaks and slopes, along great rivers and in the shadowy forests, uniting their miseries with those of others who are slowly perishing. Where do hands stretch out to Brazilian tribes and those of the North of the continent and the coasts, until in the most incredible and wild confines of the Amazon jungle or mountain ranges of Perija, Venezuela's hundred thousand indigent are reached, then to the isolated Vapicharnas, who await their end, now almost definitively lost to the human race, in the hot regions of the Guianas? Yes, all these 32 million Indians, who extend from the United States border to the limits of the Southern hemisphere, and the 45 million mestizos, who for the most part differ little from the Indians; all these natives, this formidable reservoir of labour, whose rights have been trampled on, yes, what can imperialism offer them? How can these people, ignored so long, be made to believe in any benefit to come from such bloodstained hands?

Entire tribes which live unclothed; others which are supposed to be cannibalistic; others whose members die like flies upon their first contact with the conquering civilisation; others which are banished, that is, thrown off their lands, pushed to the point of squatting in the jungles, mountains, or most distant reaches of the prairies where not even the smallest particle of culture, light, bread, nor anything penetrates.

In what "alliance" — other than one for their own more rapid extermination — are these native races going to believe, these races who have been flogged for centuries, shot so their lands could be taken, beaten to death by the thousands for not working faster in their exploited labour for imperialism?

'Alliance' for Blacks?

And to the Black? What "alliance" can the system of lynching and brutal exclusion of the Black offer to the 15 million Negroes and 14 million mulattoes of Latin America, who know with horror and rage that their brothers in the North cannot ride in the same vehicles as their white compatriots, nor attend the same schools, nor even die in the same hospitals?

How are these disinherited racial groups going to believe in this imperialism, in its benefits or in any “alliance” with it which is not for lynching and exploiting them as slaves? Those masses who have not been permitted even modestly to enjoy any cultural, social, or professional benefits, who — even when they are in the majority or number millions — are persecuted by the imperialists in Ku Klux Klan costumes, are ghettoed in the most unsanitary neighborhoods, in the least comfortable tenements built expressly for them, are shoved into the most menial occupations, the hardest labour and the least lucrative professions. They cannot presume to reach the universities, advanced academies and private schools.

What Alliance for Progress can serve as encouragement to those 107 million men and women of our America, the backbone of labour in the cities and fields, whose dark skin — black, mestizo, mulatto, Indian — inspires scorn in the new colonialists? How are they — who with bitter impotence have seen how in Panama there is one wage scale for Yankees and another for Panamanians, who are regarded as an inferior race — going to put any trust in the supposed Alliance?

Misery & death

What can the workers hope for, with their starvation wages, the hardest jobs, the most miserable conditions, lack of nutrition, illness, and all the evils which foster misery?

What words can be said, what benefits can the imperialists offer to the copper, tin, iron, coal miners who cough up their lungs for the profits of merciless foreign masters, and to the fathers and sons of the lumberjacks and rubberplantation workers, to the harvesters of the fruit plantations, to the workers in the coffee and sugar mills, to the peons on the pampas and plains who forfeit their health and lives to amass the fortunes of the exploiters?

What can those vast masses — who produce the wealth, who create the values, who aid in bringing forth a new world in all places — expect? What can they expect from imperialism, that greedy mouth, that greedy hand, with no other face than misery, but the most absolute destitution and death, cold and unrecorded in the end?

What can this class, which has changed the course of history, which in other places has revolutionised the world, which is the vanguard of all the humble and exploited, what can it expect from imperialism, its most irreconcilable enemy?

And to teachers, professors, professionals, intellectuals, poets and artists, what can imperialism offer? What kind of benefits, what chance for a better and more equitable life, what purpose, what inducement, what desire to excel, to gain mastery beyond the first simple steps, can it offer to those who devotedly care for the generations of children and young people on whom imperialism will later gorge itself? What can it

offer to these people who live on degrading wages in most countries, who almost everywhere suffer restrictions on their right of political and social expression, whose economic future doesn't exceed the bare limits of their shaky resources and compensation, who are buried in a gray life without prospects which ends with a pension that does not even meet half the cost of living? What "benefits" or "alliances" can imperialism offer them?

Culture under imperialism

If imperialism provides sources of aid to the professions, arts, and publications, it is always well understood that their products must reflect its interests, aims and "nothingness". On the other hand, the novels which attempt to reflect the reality of the world of imperialism's rapacious deeds; the poems aspiring to protest against its enslavement, its interference in life, in thought, in the very bodies of nations and peoples; and the militant arts which in their expression try to capture the forms and content of imperialism's aggression and the constant pressure on every progressive living and breathing thing and on all that is revolutionary, which teaches, which — full of light and conscience, of clarity and beauty — tries to guide men and peoples to better destinies, to the highest summits of life and justice all these meet imperialism's severest censure. They run into obstacles, condemnation, and McCarthyite persecution. Its presses are closed to them; their names are barred from its columns of print and a campaign of the most atrocious silence is imposed against them which is another contradiction of imperialism. For it is then that the writer, poet, painter, sculptor, the creator in any material, the scientist, begins truly to live in the tongue of the people, in the heart of millions of men throughout the world. Imperialism puts everything backward, deforms it, diverts it into its own channels for profit, to multiply its dollars; buying words or paintings or stutterings or turning into silence the expression of revolutionists, of progressive men, of those who struggle for the people and their needs.

We cannot forget, in this sad picture, the underprivileged children, the neglected, the futureless children of America.

America, a continent with a high birth rate, also has a high death rate. The mortality of children under a year old in 11 countries a few years ago was over 125 per thousand, and in 17 others it stood at 90 children per thousand. In 102 nations of the world, on the other hand, the rate is 51. In Latin America, then, there die, sadly neglected, 74 out of a thousand in the first year after birth. In some Latin America countries that rate reaches 300 per thousand; thousands and thousands of children up to seven years old die of incredible diseases in America; diarrheas, pneumonias, malnutrition, hunger.

Thousands and thousands are sick without hospital treatment, medicines; thousands and thousands walking about, victims of endemic cretinism, malaria, trachoma, and other diseases caused by contamination, lack of water and other necessities. Diseases of this nature are common among those Latin American countries where thousands and thousands of children are in agony, children of outcasts, children of the poor and of the petty bourgeoisie with a hard life and precarious means. The statistics, which would be redundant here, are bloodcurdling. Any official publication of the international organisations gathers them by the hundreds.

Mass illiteracy

Regarding education, one becomes indignant merely to think of what America lacks on the cultural level. While the United States has a level of eight or nine years of schooling for those in its population who are 15 years and older, Latin America, plundered and pauperised by the US, has a level of less than one year of approved schooling in the same age group.

It makes one even more angry to know that of the children between five and 14 years old, only 20% are enrolled in a school in some countries, and even in those best countries the level is just 60%. That is to say, more than half the children of Latin America do not go to school. But the pain continues to grow when we learn that enrollment in the first three grades comprises more than 80% of those enrolled; and that in the sixth grade the enrollment fluctuates from a bare six to 22 pupils for each hundred who began in the first grade. Even in those countries which believe they have taken care of their children, pupil dropouts between the first and sixth grade averages 73%. In Cuba, before the Revolution, it was 74%. In Colombia, a “representative democracy”, it is 78%. And if one looks closely at the countryside only 1% of the children reach the fifth grade in the best of cases.

When one investigates this disastrous student absenteeism, there is one cause which explains it: the economy of misery. Lack of schools, lack of teachers, lack of family resources, child labour. In the last analysis— imperialism and its product of oppression and backwardness.

The summary of this nightmare which torments America, from one end to the other, has lived, is that on this continent of almost 200 million human beings, two-thirds are Indians, mestizos, and Blacks — the “discriminated against”; on this continent of semicolonies about four persons per minute die of hunger, of curable illness or premature old age, 5500 per day, two million per year, ten million each five years. These deaths could easily be avoided, but nevertheless they take place. Two-thirds of the Latin American population lives briefly and lives under constant threat of death. A

holocaust of lives, which in 15 years has caused twice the number of deaths of World War I and still rages. Meanwhile, from Latin America a continuous torrent of money flows to the United States: some \$4000 a minute, \$5 million a day, \$2 billion a year, \$10 billion every five years. For each thousand dollars which leave us, there remains one corpse. A thousand dollars per corpse: that is the price of what is called imperialism! A thousand dollars per death, four deaths every minute!

Punta del Este

But why did they meet at Punta del Este despite this American reality? Perhaps to bring a single drop of hope? No!

The people know that at Punta del Este the ministers, who expelled Cuba, met to renounce national sovereignty; that the government of the United States went there not only to establish the basis for aggression against Cuba, but the basis for intervention against the people's liberation movements in any American nation; that the United States is preparing a bloody drama for Latin America; that just as the exploiting oligarchies now renounce the principle of sovereignty, they will not hesitate to solicit intervention of Yankee troops against their own people, and that for this end the North American delegation proposed a watchdog committee against subversion in the InterAmerican Defence Council, with executive powers, and the adoption of collective measures. Subversion for the Yankee imperialists is the struggle of hungry people for bread, the struggle of peasants for land, the struggle of the peoples against imperialist exploitation.

A "watchdog committee" with executive powers in the InterAmerican Defence Council means a continental repressive force against the peoples under the command of the Pentagon. "Collective measures" means the landing of Yankee Marines in any country of America.

To the accusation that Cuba wants to export its revolution, we reply: Revolutions are not exported, they are made by the people.

Example

What Cuba can give to the people, and has already given, is its example.

And what does the Cuban Revolution teach? That revolution is possible, that the people can make it, that in the contemporary world there are no forces capable of halting the liberation movement of the peoples.

Our triumph would never have been feasible if the Revolution itself had not been inexorably destined to arise out of existing conditions in our socioeconomic reality, a reality which exists to an even greater degree in a good number of Latin American

countries.

It inevitably occurs that in the nations where the control of the Yankee monopolies is strongest, the exploitation of the oligarchy cruelest, and the situation of the labouring and peasant masses most unbearable, the political power appears most solid. The state of siege becomes habitual. Every manifestation of discontent by the masses is repressed by force. The democratic path is closed completely. The brutal character of dictatorship, the form of rule adopted by the ruling classes, reveals itself more clearly than ever. It is then that the revolutionary explosion of the peoples becomes inevitable.

Although it is true that in those underdeveloped countries of America the working class is generally relatively small, there is a social class which, because of the subhuman conditions in which it lives, constitutes a potential force that, led by the workers and the revolutionary intellectuals, has a decisive importance in the struggle for national liberation: the peasants.

Hardships

In our countries are two conditions: an underdeveloped industry and an agrarian regime of feudal character. That is why, with all the hardships of the conditions of life of the urban workers, the rural population lives in even more horrible conditions of oppression and exploitation; but it is also, with exceptions, the absolute majority sector, at times exceeding 70% of the Latin American population.

Discounting the landlords, who often reside in the cities, the rest of that great mass gains its livelihood working as peons on the *haciendas* [large estates or plantations] for the most miserable wages, or work the land under conditions of exploitation which in no manner puts the Middle Ages to shame. These circumstances determine that in Latin America the poor rural population constitutes a tremendous potential revolutionary force.

The armies, built and equipped for conventional war, which are the force on which the power of the exploiting classes rests, become absolutely impotent when they have to confront the irregular struggle of the peasants on their own terrain. They lose ten men for each revolutionary fighter who falls. Demoralisation spreads rapidly among them from having to face an invisible and invincible enemy who does not offer them the opportunity of showing off their academy tactics and their braggadocio which they use so much in military displays to curb the city workers and the students.

The initial struggle by small combat units is incessantly fed by new forces, the mass movement begins to loosen its bonds, the old order little by little begins to break into a thousand pieces, and that is the moment when the working class and the urban masses decide the battle.

What is it that from the beginning of the struggle of those first nuclei makes them invincible, regardless of the numbers, power, the resources of their enemies? It is the aid of the people, and they will be able to count on that help of the people on an evergrowing scale.

Role of peasants

But the peasantry is a class which, because of the uncultured state in which it is kept and the isolation in which it lives, needs the revolutionary and political leadership of the working class and the revolutionary intellectuals, for without them it would not by itself be able to plunge into the struggle and achieve victory.

In the actual historic conditions of Latin America, the national bourgeoisie cannot lead the antifeudal and antiimperialist struggle. Experience shows that in our nations that class, even when its interests are in contradiction to those of Yankee imperialism, has been incapable of confronting it, for it is paralysed by fear of social revolution and frightened by the cry of the exploited masses.

Facing the dilemma of imperialism or revolution, only its most progressive strata will be with the people.

The actual world correlation of forces and the universal movement for the liberation of the colonial and dependent peoples points out to the working class and the revolutionary intellectuals of Latin America their true role, which is to place themselves resolutely in the vanguard of the struggle against imperialism and feudalism.

Imperialism, utilising the great movie monopolies, its wire services, its periodicals, books, and reactionary newspapers, resorts to the most subtle lies to sow divisionism and inculcate fear and superstition among the most ignorant people with regard to revolutionary ideas which can and should frighten only the powerful exploiters with their worldly interests and privileges.

Divisionism, a product of all kinds of prejudices, false ideas and lies; sectarianism, dogmatism, a lack of broadness in analysing the role of each social layer, its parties, organisations, and leaders, all make difficult the necessary unity of action of the democratic and progressive forces of our peoples. They are defects of growth, infantile sicknesses of the revolutionary movement which must be left behind. In the antifeudal and anti-imperialist struggle it is possible to bring the majority of the people resolutely behind goals of liberation which unite the spirit of the working class, the peasants, the intellectual workers, the petty bourgeoisie and the most progressive layers of the national bourgeoisie. These sectors comprise the immense majority of the population and join together great social forces capable of sweeping out the imperialist and reactionary feudal rule. In that broad movement they can and must struggle together

for the good of our nations, for the good of our peoples, and for the good of America. There is a place for all progressives, from the old militant Marxist to the sincere Catholic who has nothing to do with the Yankee monopolists and the feudal lords of the land.

That movement would pull along with itself the most progressive elements of the armed forces, those also humiliated by the Yankee military missions, the betrayal of national interests by the feudal oligarchies and the sacrifice of the national sovereignty to Washington's dictates.

Where the roads for the peoples are closed, where the repression of workers and peasants is fierce, where the rule of the Yankee monopolists is strongest, the first and most important task is to understand that it is neither honourable nor correct to beguile people with the fallacious and convenient illusion of uprooting — by legal means which don't exist and won't exist — ruling classes who are entrenched in all the state positions, monopolising education, owning all media of information, possessing infinite financial resources — a power which the monopolies and oligarchies will defend with blood and fire and with the might of their police and armies.

The duty of revolutionaries

The duty of every revolutionary is to make the revolution. It is known that the revolution will triumph in America and throughout the world, but it is not for revolutionaries to sit in the doorways of their houses waiting for the corpse of imperialism to pass by. The role of Job doesn't suit a revolutionary. Each year that the liberation of America is speeded up will mean the lives of millions of children saved, millions of intelligences saved for culture, an infinite quantity of pain spared the people. Even if the Yankee imperialists prepare a bloody drama for America, they will not succeed in crushing the peoples' struggles, they will only arouse universal hatred against themselves. And such a drama will also mark the death of their greedy and carnivorous system.

Unity

No nation in Latin America is weak — because each forms part of a family of 200 million brothers, who suffer the same miseries, who harbor the same sentiments, who have the same enemy, who dream about the same better future and who count upon the solidarity of all honest men and women throughout the world.

Great as was the epic of Latin American independence, heroic as was that struggle, today's generation of Latin Americans is called upon to engage in an epic which is even greater and more decisive for humanity. For that struggle was for liberation from Spanish colonial power, from a decadent Spain invaded by the armies of Napoleon.

Today the call for struggle is for liberation from the most powerful world imperialist centre, from the strongest force of world imperialism and to render humanity a greater service than that rendered by our predecessors.

But this struggle, to a greater extent than the earlier one, will be waged by the masses, will be carried out by the people; the people are going to play a much more important role now than then, the leaders are less important and will be less important in this struggle than in the one before.

This epic before us is going to be written by the hungry Indian masses, the peasants without land, the exploited workers. It is going to be written by the progressive masses, the honest and brilliant intellectuals, who so greatly abound in our suffering Latin American countries. Struggles of masses and ideas. An epic which will be carried forward by our people, despised and maltreated by imperialism, our people, unreckoned with till today, who are now beginning to shake off their slumber. Imperialism considered us a weak and submissive flock; and now it begins to be terrified of that flock; a gigantic flock of 200 million Latin Americans in whom Yankee monopoly capitalism now sees its gravediggers.

This toiling humanity, inhumanly exploited, these paupers, controlled by the whip and overseer, have not been reckoned with or have been little reckoned with. From the dawn of independence their fate has been the same: Indians, gauchos, mestizos, zambos, quadroons, whites without property or income, all this human mass which formed the ranks of the “nation”, which never reaped any benefits, which fell by the millions, which was cut into bits, which won independence from the mother country for the bourgeoisie, which was shut out from its share of the rewards, which continued to occupy the lowest step on the ladder of social benefits, which continued to die of hunger, curable diseases and neglect, because for them there were never enough essentials of life — ordinary bread, a hospital bed, the medicine which cures, the hand which aids.

But now from one end of the continent to the other they are signaling with clarity that the hour has come — the hour of their redemption. Now this anonymous mass, this America of colour, sombre, taciturn America, which all over the continent sings with the same sadness and disillusionment, now this mass is beginning to enter conclusively into its own history, is beginning to write it with its own blood, is beginning to suffer and die for it.

Wave of anger

Because now in the fields and mountains of America, on its slopes and prairies and in its jungles, in the wilderness or in the traffic of cities, this world is beginning with full

cause to erupt. Anxious hands are stretched forth, ready to die for what is theirs, to win those rights which were laughed at by one and all for 500 years. Yes, now history will have to take the poor of America into account, the exploited and spurned of Latin America, who have decided to begin writing history for themselves for all time. Already they can be seen on the roads, on foot, day after day, in endless marches of hundreds of kilometers to the governmental "eminences", to obtain their rights.

Already they can be seen armed with stones, sticks, machetes, in one direction and another, each day, occupying lands, sinking hooks into the land which belongs to them and defending it with their lives. They can be seen carrying signs, slogans, flags; letting them flap in the mountain or prairie winds. And the wave of anger, of demands for justice, of claims for rights, which is beginning to sweep the lands of Latin America, will not stop. That wave will swell with every passing day. For that wave is composed of the greatest number, the majorities in every respect, those whose labour amasses the wealth and turns the wheels of history. Now, they are awakening from the long, brutalising sleep to which they had been subjected.

For this great humanity has said, "enough!" and has begun to march. And their giant march will not be halted until they conquer true independence for which they have vainly died more than once. Today, however, those who die will die like the Cubans at Playa Giron. They will die for their own true and never-to-be-surrendered independence.

Patria o Muerte!

Venceremos!

The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba resolves that this Declaration be known as the Second Declaration of Havana, translated into the major languages and distributed throughout the world. It also resolves to urge all the friends of the Cuban Revolution in Latin America that it be widely distributed among the worker, peasant, student, and intellectual masses of this continent.

THE PEOPLE OF CUBA

Havana, Cuba

Free Territory of the Americas

February 4, 1962

2. ‘The revolution must be a school of unfettered thought’

Text of speech given by Fidel Castro at the University of Havana, March 13, 1962, commemorating the anniversary of the 1957 student attack on the palace of the dictator Batista, in which student leader Jose Antonio Echevarria and others were killed.



People of Cuba, this is a doubly important occasion for us. First of all because we observe a historic date, singularly important in the revolutionary process, and secondly because we are meeting with the youth. We are meeting with the students.

Already this fifth anniversary — fifth anniversary? — and fourth commemoration — the numbers don’t come out right. It was in 1957. The fifth? The fact that that event took place in 195? and that the revolution triumphed in 1959 had me a bit confused. But at any rate, what I want to say is the following: There is something new, there is a change, there is an appreciable qualitative change in the make-up of this meeting. This meeting to mark the fourth anniversary reflects a substantial change in the life of the nation, it already reflects a profound change in the life of the students, in the make-up of the student body, in the university itself.

It can truly be said that today we can all participate in this meeting with true satisfaction, with the true and only satisfaction with which one can remember the fallen. And this university of today, this student body, these rows upon rows of young people present here, are telling us that we have a right to feel satisfied on a day like today, and that we are doing homage in a fitting way, in the only fitting way in which the dead can be honoured.

And that is the way we are honouring Jose Antonio Echevarria and all those who fell on that 13th of March: With 3000 holders of university scholarships present and with thousands upon thousands of young people present who hold scholarships to

the university preparatory schools and to the preparatory technological institutes. We commemorate this anniversary with a youth which is growing up and developing in the midst of the revolution, with a youth which is more and more unified, more and more revolutionary. And we commemorate this anniversary of the 13th of March with the befitting presence of the sons and daughters of the workers, of the humble, of the masses from the countryside.

Builders of the future

And the hopes of the revolution are entrusted to this youth. To this youth are entrusted the most genuine hopes of our people. And to this youth are also entrusted the most genuine and most human hopes of us, the revolutionists, of all the revolutionists. And this youth must be spoken to, this youth must be encouraged, this youth must be educated. They must be oriented, they must be forged. This youth must become what we all dreamed for the future. This youth must become what we all hope the people of tomorrow, the country's new generations, will be. This youth must become what all of us would have wanted to be, to lead the lives that all of us would have wanted to live. In short, with this youth the future must be built.

And what type of youth do we want? Do we, perhaps, want a youth which will simply limit itself to listening to and parroting what we say? No! We want a youth which will think. Perhaps a youth which will be revolutionary just to imitate us? No! Rather a youth which will learn to be revolutionary of its own accord. A youth which will convince itself. A youth which will fully develop its own thinking.

And why do we think that this youth will develop along revolutionary lines? Simply because it has all the conditions for doing so. It has all the conditions which will permit it to develop into revolutionists, to think and to act as revolutionists.

We do not say that example is worthless. Example influences. Example is valuable. But even more valuable than the influence exerted by example is that exerted by one's own conviction, by one's own thinking. And we know that this youth will be revolutionary simply because we believe in the revolution, because we have faith in revolutionary ideas, and because we know that those ideas will win the minds and will win the hearts of this youth.

And what is the purpose of this preamble? What are we going to speak about tonight? We simply want to speak to the youth about the youth. And this preamble has something to do with what I am going to explain here tonight and which young people should analyse.

I am going to make a criticism here tonight of an occurrence which appears to be minor but which we should nevertheless analyse and criticise and we are going to

analyse it publicly. We have here before us tonight an example which is going to serve as a lesson to us and which is going to serve so that we may make a revolutionary analysis. The *companero* who acted as master of ceremonies read a series of documents at the beginning of this meeting — a few words, some writings, and among them he read the political testament of Jose Antonio Echevarria. And while he was reading we also read the testament. On the last page of a pamphlet which had been handed to us, we, too, read along, mechanically, *companero* Jose Antonio Echevarria's political testament to the people of Cuba.

And he began to read it. He read the first paragraph. He read the second paragraph. He began to read the third paragraph and when he was at the end of the third paragraph he noticed that without reading three lines he skipped to the fourth paragraph.

Listen, *companeros*, do not be hasty to pass judgment, nor even to blame the *companero*.

And it seemed to us that he had skipped. And out of curiosity we read that part since he had skipped it. And it says — I am going to read the third paragraph — “Our pledge to the people of Cuba was given in La Carta de Mexico which united the youth in one line of conduct and action. But the circumstances needed for the student sector to fulfill the role assigned to it were not present at the right moment, forcing us to postpone the fulfillment of our pledge.” From there he skips “... If we fall may our blood” and I read the three lines which are: “We believe that the time has come for us to fulfill our pledge. We are confident that the purity of our intentions will bring us God's blessing so that we may bring the rule of justice to our nation.”

Pay attention, because this is very interesting. Amazed, I said to myself, “What is this? Could these three lines have been left out deliberately?” This doubt gnaws me and I ask him when he finishes reading, “Who gave you these papers? Who prepared this?” He said, “No, when I entered I was given instructions. I told them that I was going to read this and they told me to take out these three lines.”

Is it possible, *companeros*? Let us analyse it. *Companeros*, could we be so cowardly, and could we be so intellectually warped, as to come here to read the political testament of Jose Antonio Echevarria and be so cowardly, so morally wretched, as to suppress three lines? Just because these three lines are an idiomatic expression or Jose Antonio Echevarria's way of thinking which we have no business analysing?

Mutilate history?

Are we going to mutilate what he wrote? Are we going to mutilate what he believed? And are we going to feel crushed merely by what he believed or thought in the matter of religion? What kind of faith is that in one's own ideas? What concept is that of

history? And how can history be conceived in such a wretched manner? How can history be conceived as something dead? As something putrid? As an immovable stone?

Could such cowardice be called a dialectical concept of history? Could such a manner of thinking be called Marxism? Could such a fraud be called socialism? Could such a deception be called communism? No!

Whoever conceives of history as he should, whoever conceives of Marxism as he should, and understands and interprets it and applies it to history, will not commit such an act of stupidity. For with that criterion we would have to start suppressing all the writings of Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, who expressed the thinking of his day, who expressed the thinking of his class, who expressed the revolutionary thought corresponding to a period in which the creoles, representatives of the island's wealth, rebelled against the Spanish yoke and Spanish exploitation,

And what ideas influenced those men? The ideas of the French Revolution, that is to say, the ideas of the bourgeois revolution. And what ideas influenced the Fathers of the American Republics? What ideas influenced Bolivar? Those very same ideas! What ideas influenced Marti? What ideas influenced Maceo? What ideas influenced Maximo Gomez and the other men of that glorious breed? What ideas influenced our poets, representatives of Cuban culture, of those days at the beginning of our history, if not the ideas of the age?

Then we would have to suppress Marti's works because Marti was not a Marxist-Leninist, because Marti responded to the revolutionary thought proper to our nation at that time. If Marxism-Leninism is the ideology of the working class when that class emerges and, conscious of itself, flings itself into the struggle for its emancipation, how could we expect Marxism-Leninism to be the ideology when the task before a country, the task before Latin America at the time of independence, and the task before our nation, were national tasks, tasks of a different kind, of another type, corresponding to the development of our nation at that specific moment?

If we followed that line of thinking we would have to destroy the concept of the revolutionist from Spartacus to Marti. As a result of that short-sighted, sectarian, stupid and warped concept, which denies history and denies Marxism, we would be forced to deny all values, all history. We would be forced to deny our very roots, when all that treasure of human progress, of human effort, of human sacrifice, should be gathered up and added to our nation's beautiful history and to the beautiful history of a mankind which is progressing, which has progressed from the beginning, which is progressing and will continue to progress more and more.

If we pursued to its end that line of thought, we should come to believe that we

were super-revolutionists, of believing that we had made all of the nation's history, forgetting the tens of thousands of mambises [19th Century fighters for Cuban independence] who fell; forgetting the tens of thousands of heroes who died along the way, all of whom in one fashion or another marked the way, wrote the nation's history, and created the conditions thanks to which we, fortunate generation, had the opportunity of achieving the highest goals and of seeing dreams come true, the dreams of generations of fighters, who, one after the other, sacrificed and immolated themselves in preparing the way.

That he invoked his religious beliefs — if this phrase is an expression of that sentiment — does not detract from Jose Antonio Echevarria's heroism. It detracts nothing from his greatness, nothing from his glory. For it was the expression of the revolutionary sentiment of the university youth, of the generous sentiments of that youth, speaking through one of its most courageous leaders, that produced such a serene and selfless testament, such a serene and generous testament, as of one who was almost certain that he was going to die. Through those efforts, through that sacrifice, through the commingling of all that generous blood, of that rebel blood, that heroic blood, in which was blended the desire for freedom of all the youth from Mella to Jose Antonio Echevarria. With Mella's blood and with Jose Antonio Echevarria's blood and with the blood of many like them, the nation's history was written. And the greatness of the revolution consists in knowing how to unite all that effort, all that blood, to make the revolution and to carry it forward.

How can we face our enemies with integrity while playing tricks like these? The fact that the counter-revolutionaries have tried to use this phrase in their attempt to present Jose Antonio Echevarria as a representative of their thinking, that is, the thinking of the counter-revolutionaries, the fact that they have tried to use this phrase to fight against the revolution, to fight Marxism, the fact that the counter-revolutionaries with the hypocrisy and moral feebleness which characterises them, should act in this fashion, is understandable. But that we, revolutionists and Marxists, should for that reason suppress that phrase, is not understandable.

It is known that a revolutionist may hold a religious belief. He may hold it. The revolution does not force anyone. It does not go into his heart of hearts. It does not exclude the men who love their country, the men who want justice to exist in their country, justice which will put an end to exploitation, abuse and odious imperialist domination. It does not force them. Nor does it hold them in disgrace simply because they may have in their heart of hearts some religious belief.

It is common knowledge that the latifundistas [great landowners], the exploiters throughout history, have wanted to use religion against revolution. And it is there, in

the Second Declaration of Havana: The Roman patricians who had their religion, which was the religion of the ruling class, used their religion to persecute the Christians, to burn them at the stake and to sacrifice them in the circus. Christianity was the religion of the poor, the humble, the slaves, the poor of Rome. Time passed. Slavery disappeared, that is to say, that system of slavery. A new social system came into being—feudalism. And then the priests, the archbishops, the popes and those nobles, burned at the stake those men of revolutionary sentiments who were opposed to that feudal system. Then, the leading philosophers, thinkers who expressed the sentiments of a class which was being born, were burned at the stake by the inquisitors.

Later, another social order, capitalism, was established. Capitalism developed and turned into imperialism. Then we find the archbishops anathematising the proletarian revolutions and asking for the shooting of the leaders of the revolutionary class, that is, of the workers. Then, invoking religion, they persecute revolutionary thought.

The latifundistas, the lackeys, the criminals who came to Playa Giron, brought with them four priests. And one or two of the four priests were dropped by parachute. And they came on their way, saying masses, pretending all the time to hold beliefs which they do not hold—because what religious beliefs could that band of traitors, exploiters and lackeys have? Perhaps the majority of them never went to church. Nevertheless they were kneeling there before the priest when they had come to kill campesinos and workers; when they had come to restore the dominance of the US corporations, of foreign exploitation, and of the yoke of the latifundistas and exploiters of every kind. And they came with crucifixes in their hands.

Deception

It is common knowledge that that is the pose of the counter-revolutionaries and that with that pose they try to deceive people who believe. Since they do not have a worthy banner, since they do not have a cause which will attract the masses, they try to resort to religious beliefs, to superstitions, to anything. But what fault is this of any good Catholic, a sincere Catholic, who may be a member of the militia, who supports the revolution, who is against imperialism, who is against illiteracy who is against the exploitation of man by man, who is against all social injustices? What fault is this of his?

Very well now. We write a revolutionary document. We publish it in several languages. All the people support it. More than a million citizens, who are present when it is read, vote for it. It creates an extraordinary impression in Latin America. And what do we say? We say that in the struggle for national liberation, in the struggle against imperialism, all progressive elements, all patriotic elements, should be united and that in that front there should be not only the sincere Catholic, who has nothing

to do with imperialism or with latifundismo, but also the old Marxist fighter.

We declare this to the whole world and we come here with an unheard of display of cowardice to delete from the testament of a companero the invocation he made of God's name. While on the one hand we tell them that they have to unite, and that if they are patriotic and revolutionary in the fight against latifundismo and exploitation, no obstacle is posed by the fact that one is a believer. That one has a religion, is a Christian or any other — and that other may be a Marxist, putting his faith in Marxist philosophy — that that is not an obstacle; and we come here with this display of cowardice to suppress a phrase. This could not be overlooked. Because what is this? A symptom! A wretched tendency — cowardly, warped — of someone who does not have faith in Marxism, of one who does not have faith in the revolution, of one who does not have faith in his ideas.

And so that we may complete seeing it as an example right here and now, it so happens that the companero, who received that order to omit that part, is a poet. He has this little book of verses and among his verses he has one entitled, "Prayer for the Anonymous God." Then he begins by expressing his belief and later he says to me, "I had a guilt complex about all these things." How can he avoid having a complex? He is a companero who is a member of the militia, a companero who is a master of ceremonies, a companero who is integrated into the revolution. And by virtue of the fact that he once wrote verses which spoke of God, he has to live with a guilt complex. And how is he to avoid getting a complex if, when he arrives here, he is told, "Take out that word!"

Into what is the revolution changed by this? Into a tyranny! And that is not revolution! Into what is the revolution changed? Into a school of docile spirits! And that is not the revolution! And what must the revolution be? The revolution must be a school of revolutionists! The revolution must be a school of courageous men! The revolution must be a school of unfettered thought!

The revolution must be a forger of character and of men. The revolution above all must be faith in one's own ideas, application of one's ideas to the reality of history and to the reality of life. The revolution has to induce men to study, to think, to analyse in order to possess profound conviction, so profound that there will be no need to have recourse to such tricks.

For if we constantly speak of this, it is because we have faith in the people, because we believe in revolutionary ideas, because we know that our people are a revolutionary people, and because we know that our people will be more revolutionary each day, because we believe in Marxism-Leninism, because we believe that Marxism-Leninism is an undeniable truth. It is simply because of this, because we have faith in our ideas

and in the people that we are not so cowardly as to be able to accept such a thing.

We are sincerely sorry for the person who is responsible for this, but he should make a thorough self-criticism. How can we, in the presence of a new generation, a generation which is beginning to study, which is thirsting for knowledge, which is thirsting to read, which is thirsting to embark on the study of history, which is thirsting to embark on the study of Marxism, how can we put on that generation blinders so large that we will not permit them to read the full text of a historical document of a *companero* of the revolution, a *companero* who, like Marti, Maceo, Mella and Guiteras, made history and who step by step prepared the way of the nation?

Yes, perhaps the first step was a very small one, but it was the first step, the first humble step. And so after the first, the second, and after the second, the third — that is how the history of the nation was built. And if today we find ourselves on this advanced stage of history and of revolutionary thought, it is because this stage began being built with the first humble step of our first patriots.

There are many here who imagine themselves better revolutionists than anybody else and who think that the revolution is made by yelling. Who think that the revolution is made by yelling, “To the left! To the left!” I don’t want to single out the Rebel Youth for criticism because after all they have corrected some of their slogans

For example, they used to say: “We are socialists, forward, forward, and whoever doesn’t like it let him take a laxative!”

Frankly, I didn’t like that slogan because it wasn’t positive. They changed it to: “We are socialists, forward, forward, and whoever agrees with us let him raise his hand!” That slogan is a positive one. The former slogan compared socialism to a laxative and said that whoever didn’t like it should take a physic. It doesn’t invite anyone to study; it doesn’t invite anyone to become a Marxist. It says that you have to swallow it whether you like it or not — “... If you don’t like it take a laxative.” Who are you going to win over with that?

“To the left! To the left! Always to the left!” That is not socialism. That could be Leftism, Infantile Disorder of Communism. I think that we are sufficiently grown up and mature enough to be able to face these problems in order thereby to create a true revolutionary spirit but not a spirit which consists of mere words, nor a spirit which is forced upon people. How dare they? Who has been forced to accept socialism here? The people have become Marxists out of personal conviction; because the revolution itself has convinced them. No one has imposed it upon them, gentlemen. Batista tried to impose imperialism and there was no way in which he could do it. There was no way in which he could impose his reactionary spirit, his military, imperialist and capitalist rule. He could not do it.

It is the people; it is the revolution itself with its accomplishments, with its struggles, with its proofs which has been convincing this people which has an extraordinary political sensitivity. And it has turned this people into one of the most advanced of the present day; into one with an extraordinary revolutionary spirit. This is not our opinion alone. It is an opinion expressed by many visitors who reached this conclusion after seeing how the man in the street thinks and what the children talk about. For these visitors have gone to the schools and the children have given remarkably good answers to their questions.

This notwithstanding, we believe that a greater Marxist spirit must be created and that in the youth — above all — something more than a socialist spirit must be created: a communist spirit must be created.

The Rebel Youth have been discussing here whether to change the name of the organisation, whether to give it a new name, what name should they give it, whether they should call it the Socialist Youth. I have given my sincere opinion. I believe that this youth, this new generation which we are forging for the future — to their organisation, to the young people's organisation of the United Party of the Socialist Revolution, we should give the name of Organisation or Association of Communist Youth.

Stages of development

Now, why should we do so? Why? Simply because we must distinguish between socialism and communism. First of all it must be clearly understood that social systems cannot be imposed, that they must be built upon definite bases. And we are constructing the bases of socialism. We are marching towards socialism. We are not yet at the stage of socialism. The revolution is socialist. We are socialists but we are building socialism. The society itself is not socialist although the majority of the people may be so.

What do you think of that? This is so because there are still many traces of the capitalist past and we are now engaged in constructing socialism. The present generation is living through that stage of the construction of socialism and it is logical that the party of the revolution should be called the United Party of the Socialist Revolution, because we are constructing socialism. But not the youth, the youth constitutes the future generation; a generation which should live at a more advanced stage — not in socialism but in communism.

And this simply means — anyone can understand this — that the future generations must be prepared for the society of the future; that we must now begin to forge the man of the future. His feelings must be forged, his conscience, his character, his spirit.

In him must be developed a more generous conscience, a more revolutionary spirit — more advanced, newer. Where is he to come from but from the youth, where we find the raw material for the formation of future generations?

We have to start now to create that spirit, but there has not been much evidence of that spirit. We have such excellent raw material—a youth who have just accomplished the feat of eradicating illiteracy in one year. We should lose no time in making a great effort to create that communist spirit in the youth.

What happens very often and is depressing to behold? Let us take a look at a Rebel Youth. He is a young man who has a well-developed revolutionary spirit and conscience. But he is 18 years old and single. He is given employment in one of the ministries. There exists in that ministry a wage scale and suddenly, a boy of 17, or sometimes 16 or 18, and single is put to work, and because of the wage scale he starts earning 500 pesos a month because he was given an important position. Does this make good revolutionists? Does this create a communist spirit? No!

If later on he marries a girl who earns a good salary then between them they might well be earning 1000 pesos a month. And as happens in many similar cases, what do we create through such a procedure? We create a citizen who becomes accustomed to receive more, much more, than he needs. And the socialist formula is that each person gives according to his work and receives according to his work and the classical communist formula is that each person gives according to his ability and receives according to his needs.

It would be very difficult to make a communist out of that young man who did not have those needs. It would be something else again if that young man had seven little brothers and sisters who had lost their father and mother and he had to support the whole family and he explained his situation. But if his parents are earning salaries and he has no other needs, are we not corrupting that young man? Well, if we don't corrupt him, are we not accustoming him to an income that is much higher than what he needs? This is not the way to form revolutionists. This is not the way to form communists. A greater revolutionary spirit must be created toward work, toward others, toward the whole people, toward society and toward life. This must be done and it must be done with youth.

Well, we have had certain problems. Salaries have been increased. More than satisfactory salaries have been paid to those in certain categories of technical work. But can it be called evidence of revolutionary spirit in the young men who are now in the secondary schools, those who took part in the literacy campaign, who will soon be in the universities and later, still young, perhaps only 20 and 22 years old and already having finished training as specialists, perhaps as surgeons or in some other specialised

line of work, and who perhaps marry girls who studied, specialised and graduated with them — is it evidence of revolutionary spirit for these couples to earn 1600 pesos a month between them?

Is that revolutionary spirit? This is all right for those who have already graduated, including those who are at present specialising in the universities. But in all of this generation, in all these 60,000 holders of scholarships, are we or are we not going to start to create a truly revolutionary attitude, a higher attitude, a more generous and more revolutionary attitude toward society and toward life?

These are matters which truly worry us, and they are matters which we should sincerely begin to put into effect. And we should work to create a new society, a new generation without privileges, free of anti-social individualism; the generation that is going to live in abundance, where all will be able to have all their needs fulfilled as a result of the efforts and the labour of all.

What better conditions are there for accomplishing all this than the conditions surrounding this youth of ours? A youth which does not have to be concerned with their fathers' earnings, nor with the family income, nor with the number of brothers and sisters. A youth which by the mere fact that they are young, by the mere fact that they live in this country, by the mere fact that they want to improve themselves, to be useful to their nation, without worrying, I repeat, about their fathers' incomes nor their families' economic situation, receive scholarships, come to the capital or wherever it may be, go to study in the finest schools, live in the most comfortable mansions, are supplied with clothing, shoes, food, are given free medical attention, all the educational services, all the cultural services, all recreational facilities, because we have made the effort, the people are making the necessary efforts so that our youth will not lack anything.

And this morning at a meeting of labour leaders, more than 300 houses in an old summer and vacation resort of the upper classes were turned over to the Executive Committee of the Cuban Confederation of Workers for use by the workers. When I spoke with those workers who are the heads of families it was a fact of extraordinary significance for us — right there near one of those schools where there are 5000 young people studying, where formerly the ordinary citizen could not even walk — when we spoke about all that that meant for the welfare of the nation, I asked them if any of them had members of their families there and saw that many of them raised their hands.

For us, it was a cause of great satisfaction to find that all the effort that was being made was worthwhile, and that if we had to go hungry so that the youth might grow strong and healthy we were willing to go hungry. And it was a great satisfaction for us

to see that outburst of enthusiasm and approval. A feeling of satisfaction which increased later on when we stopped at a construction site where there were about 50 workers who, in the course of a conversation, we asked if they had a member of their family among the holders of scholarships.

Forge revolutionists

And almost all those humble construction workers raised their hands because one had a son, another had two, another had a nephew, another a brother, another had his sweetheart studying in La Nacional, the school for former domestic workers, now studying typing and shorthand. And there was hardly one who did not have a member of his family or near relative there. It was the working class, that class which produces, that class which works, and that class which feels the revolution so deeply, and that sees very close at hand what the revolution means. What better conditions than these, I say, in which to forge revolutionists, where the young people receive all because society gives it to them, because the working people gives it to them? And here they are going to study according to their ability and they are going to receive according to their needs.

Already they are students who practice a type of communist formula — everyone studies according to his ability and receives according to his needs. What better conditions and what better revolutionary school than these? What better conditions are there for developing and stimulating the revolutionary spirit of the young, the true revolutionary spirit, conviction and conscience, deep understanding, education?

We have revolutionary schools where sometimes classes are given for 45 days, or three, four, eight months. If we could allow the young people to study Marxism, not for three months, not for a year, but rather for five years, seven years, eight years, through junior high school, through the university preparatory school, through the technological institute and through the university in order that we might better develop that true revolutionary spirit, that profound conviction of the true revolutionist who knows how to think, how to discuss matters, who has conviction and discipline, who has a new awareness, a new attitude toward life.

That is the type of revolutionist we want. That is the type of revolutionist that we want in the political organisation of the revolution. That type of man who can set an example. That nucleus which will have authority, not merely because it is a nucleus but rather because it sets the example; which has authority not just because they impose it on someone but rather because everyone recognises it. Because a lazy person who wants to pass as a revolutionist will not have anyone's respect. The privileged person who wants to pass as a revolutionist will not gain anyone's respect. And that is why it

is necessary to win the authority which example and conduct bring. That is what the nucleus will have to be.

We will not rest, *compañeros*, and we should not rest in the unending task of seeing to it that the best men and women of the nation are gathered in the political apparatus of the revolution, in the United Party of the Revolution. And that the best young people of the nation, the most disciplined, the most reliable, the most studious, the most self-sacrificing, the hardest working, the best part of our youth, should belong to the young people's organisation of the revolution. And that it be an honour, a very high honour, always an honour, always a satisfaction, that is the prize to which revolutionists should aspire, the satisfaction felt by those who fulfill their duties as men, the satisfaction felt by those who fulfill their duties toward society and toward the nation.

No privileges should be forthcoming! War against privilege! War against all manifestations of weakness, against all self-seeking!

The revolution has integrated its political leadership. The revolution has advanced in the field of organisation. Now we should continue forward like an arrow shot toward the future. We must work well, select the best. We must put an end to these minor matters; to this type of hollow, vain and useless sectarianism. War against that sectarianism which leads to privilege, which leads into the swamp.

Let us get out of that filthy swamp, that mistaken sectarianism, and let us begin, *compañeras* and *compañeros*, let us begin to do what history expects of us, what the nation expects of us, what America expects of us, what the world expects of us — with true revolutionary spirit, with a truly new spirit, with a truly creative spirit, in which the touchstone for every man and woman of the nation shall be merit, shall be the spirit of sacrifice, shall be the revolutionary conscience, shall be love of the revolution.

Patria o Muerte!

Venceremos!

3. Against Bureaucracy & Sectarianism

After the revolution, the Fidelistas moved to unite the pro-revolutionary forces — Castro's July 26 Movement, the Popular Socialist Party (the pro-Moscow Communist Party) and the student-based Revolutionary Directorate — into a single party — the Integrated Revolutionary Organisation (ORI). Anibal Escalante, a longtime PSP leader, was made organisation secretary. He used his position to build an apparatus dominated by Stalinist cadres from the PSP. This March 26, 1962 speech by Fidel on radio and TV was a public counterattack on Escalante. It was followed by a nationwide housecleaning of Escalante's minions from their positions in the state and party apparatus.



Moderator — Good evening, ladies and gentlemen of the television audience. All the radio and television stations of Cuba have been linked tonight in order to give the public the opportunity of listening to the First Secretary of the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations [ORI] and Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, Dr. Fidel Castro, who will be questioned by a panel of newspapermen composed of the *compañeros* Raul Valdes Vivo, of the newspaper *Hoy*, of Ithiel Leon, of the newspaper *Revolucion*, and Ernesto Vera, of the newspaper, *La Tarde*.

Dr. Castro proposes to deal with certain matters related to the operating methods of the ORI, the revolutionary organisation of which he is First Secretary.

The first question will be asked by *compañero* Valdes Vivo.

Raul Valdes Vivo — *compañero* Fidel Castro, recently our people have listened with renewed enthusiasm to you and to other *compañeros* of the National Directorate of the ORI insist before the masses on the necessity of improving all the work of the revolution, of combatting errors and defects, sectarianism and conformity with a

great spirit of criticism and of self-criticism. In regard to this, our people are awaiting your report tonight relating to the recent accords of the ORI National Directorate for the end of perfecting its organisational apparatus, purifying and strengthening the active revolutionary nuclei, and improving the methods and the form of work.

What can you tell us in regard to these matters, *compañero* Fidel Castro?

Dr. Fidel Castro — Well, I have many things to say in regard to these matters.

To begin with, I would like to refer to a saying of Lenin, that the attitude, that is to say, the seriousness of purpose of a revolutionary party is measured, basically, by the attitude it takes towards its own errors. And in the same way, our seriousness of purpose as revolutionists and as members of the government will be measured by the attitudes we take towards our own errors.

Of course, our enemies are always alert to know what those errors are. When those errors are made and are not subjected to self-criticism, our enemies take advantage of them. When those errors are made and are subjected to self-criticism, they may be used by the enemy, but in a very different way, because in the former case our errors would not be corrected and in the latter they would be. That is why we have decided to take a forthright and serious attitude towards our own errors.

Wide-ranging discussion

In this regard, the group of revolutionary *compañeros* who had been serving as members of the Directorate of the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations have been conducting a wide-ranging discussion. We have been making a serious analysis, an honest analysis, a deep analysis of this whole process, from the First of January [1959] up to the present. We have been analysing all that has been done, the good things that have been done and also the errors that have been made.

Accordingly, we have submitted to a process of analysis this whole stage of the formation of the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations. This is not a simple problem. This is not an unimportant problem because, simply, it has to do with the political power of the revolution; it has to do with the methods of the revolution; it has to do with the ideology of the revolution.

The revolution — everyone is aware of the characteristics of its whole development, of its origin, of the historic moment in which this victorious revolution takes place; of all the circumstances characterising the process, of the forces which participated, of the different tendencies which struggled to make their point of view prevail within the revolutionary process. In short, all of this is common knowledge.

It was logical that the revolution in this crucible — because the revolutionary

process is a true crucible of forces, of energies — should try to organise, to build the revolutionary apparatus. It was not possible to conceive of a revolution without there arising out of that revolution — as is logical — a revolutionary apparatus charged with carrying the revolution forward, with perpetuating the revolution and projecting the revolution toward the future, that is, with preparing long-range plans for the revolution.

It was logical that the revolution should concern itself with the problem of organising its political apparatus, its revolutionary apparatus. And there began that whole process which we have explained here on more than one occasion, through which the different forces which had participated in the process, which represented mass forces, forces of ideas, forces of public opinion, began to be integrated; and which, besides, represented experience, represented a wealth of values which the revolution had to integrate into that organisation.

As a result of that process — at the same time that the non-revolutionary tendencies, the reactionary tendencies, the rightist tendencies, the conservative tendencies, the pro-imperialist tendencies, were being opposed — all the forces and all the revolutionary tendencies began to come together and to unite. They began to come together more and more, and to unite more and more.

For a long time this was a process having a spontaneous nature, that is to say, it was not the result of a preconceived plan, it was not a planned process. It was a process of a spontaneous nature, which the very struggle — because of the antagonisms which a revolutionary struggle, a true revolutionary struggle, originates — began to place on one side all those who did not respond to an idea, to a way of thinking, to a true revolutionary attitude, and on the other, all those who did respond to an attitude, to an idea, to a way of thinking, which was truly revolutionary.

Very well then, everyone knows that this process, which has lasted for three years, has been filled with events, with incidents, with struggles. It has not been a normal change; it has not been a quiet development; it was, rather, like every revolution and, more particularly, a revolution which is developing under the conditions of the present Cuban revolution, under conditions *sui generis*, under difficult conditions. It was logical then to expect that it would have to face a series of problems, a series of difficulties. These problems the revolution has been overcoming.

Well now, has that whole process of the integration of the revolutionary forces— have all the steps which have been taken in these matters, have they all been free of errors? No, they have not been free of errors. Could these errors have been avoided? It cannot be determined precisely up to what point these errors could have been avoided. My personal opinion is that those errors could not have been avoided.

Certain problems, certain vices, certain attitudes, were, if not impossible — and I

think that they were impossible — at least very difficult to avoid. Why? Because a revolution is a very complicated process, because in a revolution a great variety of factors, a variety of ways of thinking hind a variety of methods, ideas, men who are very different from each other, an infinite number of circumstances, which little by little condition the process, intervene; because the process is the outcome of reality, the process is not the outcome, of an ideal existing in the minds of men, the process is the outcome of a living reality, of a specific economic, social and political reality.

And, therefore, a series of circumstances condition that process. We could not avoid a number of the early problems of the revolution. They were problems which were determined by a succession of desertions, by a succession of betrayals, by a variety of attitudes which began to manifest themselves when the revolution had barely taken its first forward steps. In addition, from the very start, the revolution clashed with a variety of ambitions, with the interests of the ruling classes, with the interests of the dominant economic classes which regarded the revolution with fear, which saw the revolution as a threat. The revolution clashed with the ideology of that class. It clashed with the thinking, with the people of that class, with the attitudes of that class, with the interests of that class.

Revolution engaged in a struggle of ideas

The revolution clashed with a variety of ideas that were established in our country, ideas which had been inculcated in our country by the forces of reaction, by the forces of imperialism; ideas which were spread by the enemies of progress. They were a whole series of false ideas, of conservative ideas, of counter-revolutionary ideas really, and which had the strength of habit, which had the strength given them by years of existence. In some cases they had the strength imparted to them by decades of existence — or even of centuries.

These ideas had the strength of superstition. They had the strength of a series of conventional lies. They had the strength of a series of slogans which are given to the people as unquestionable truths, a series of dogmas of an economic nature, of a political nature, of a social nature, which had been inculcated for decades by the mass media, in books, in the universities, in the secondary schools, by the political parties which were beholden to the ruling classes.

The new ideas of the revolution clashed with the strength of all those ideas. Wherein lay the strength of the ideas of the revolution? Was it in the publicity which had been given to these ideas? Was it in the political parties which could have been organised to spread these ideas? Were they in the existing newspapers, on the radio and television stations? No. The strength of these new ideas, that is, of the revolutionary ideas, dwelt

in the economic and social reality of our country. These ideas represented truths, truths which had to confront reality, truths which had to confront the lies of the enemies of the exploited classes, truths which simply had to win acceptance.

Why did the truths of the revolution win acceptance? They won acceptance simply because these truths, these ideas, answered the great desires of the masses; they answered the needs of the masses. And that is why all the lies began to crumble, why all the lies of the bourgeoisie began to crumble, why the lies of the reactionaries, of the landlords, of the imperialists, began to crumble. All their conventionalism, all their lies were slowly defeated by the overwhelming advance of the revolutionary ideas which represented the interests of the exploited masses.

But that marked a period of struggle, a difficult period of struggle. The masses were slowly won over to the revolutionary ideas. In that struggle everyone took a position. Not everyone was won over to these revolutionary ideas. Some took a certain position toward the revolutionary ideas and others took other positions, that is, depending on the revolutionary ideas. This is a process which cannot be cut short. This is a process in which opinions and the different classes of the nation cannot be sliced neatly because it is a very complicated one. It would be necessary to analyse the reasons why some reacted in one way and some in another.

Behind it all were the interests of the classes. The campesino, the worker, the poor citizen, the poor family, reacted according to their class interests. The rich, the latifundistas [great landowners], the owners of big stores, the bankers, those who had been educated in the ideas of the imperialists, ideas which moreover responded to their own interests, reacted differently.

And there were some who held opinions which were not in accord with the interests of their class. There were people of the poor, humble classes, so confused by lies, by superstitions, that they reacted against their own class interests. There were people who, although they could not be considered as belonging to an exploited class, reacted, nevertheless, favourably towards the revolution. There were untold numbers of young people who were not yet politically well-grounded, but who possessed an excellent attitude, great qualities, a great spirit of rebellion, a great sense of justice, of equality, a great understanding of the new, a great readiness to accept revolutionary ideas who, however, had not developed sufficiently.

All these facts denoted a great struggle; they marked a struggle between ideas. Which ideas came out victorious? The revolutionary ideas were victorious; the ideas of the masses came out victorious; the new truths of the revolution came out victorious. All lies, all dogmatism, all falsehoods, all hypocrisy were defeated.

Does this mean that that struggle has ended? No, that struggle has not ended. The

struggle assumes very different forms, very subtle forms at times. That is to say that in the first great battles between the new and the old ideas, the new ideas, the revolutionary ideas, have come out victorious over the old ideas.

Nevertheless, the struggle continues, and it will continue for a long time on a national scale, and it will continue on an international scale, and it will continue on a global scale. This same battle between ideas, this same struggle between ideologies which is going on in our country between socialism, between Marxism, between imperialism, between capitalism, between Marxist theory and bourgeois theory, the liberal theory, is going on outside of Cuba with each side using its arguments.

It is natural that when those who represent the revolutionary ideology, the Marxist ideology, make errors, that the enemy takes advantage of them; when those who represent the revolutionary truths make mistakes, when they make errors, when they have faults, the enemy takes advantage of them.

For example, if we, who are the defenders of socialism, the defenders of Marxism, as a result of the imperialist blockade, as a result of our harassment by world reaction, but in addition, as a consequence of our own errors, find ourselves facing certain shortages in food supplies, if we find, for example, that we have not had sufficient ability to produce certain articles which we had the means of producing, the enemy takes advantage of this by saying: "That is socialism, socialism is a failure, but not capitalism, under capitalism there was no rationing, this didn't happen under capitalism."

Of course, then it would be necessary to make a deeper analysis in in order to explain that under capitalism some ate and some didn't; that under capitalism some worked and some didn't; and how in spite of aggressions — let us not take into consideration all the contributing factors related to the enemy's manoeuvres against the revolution to starve it to death — in spite of these contributing factors, how socialism has meant more work for hundreds of thousands more of our people, how it has meant higher levels of income. And that if today there are people who complain that they now receive less than before, what could have been the situation of those who formerly received nothing?

The very ones who now complain that they receive such and such an amount are admitting that if they find it a bit difficult to satisfy their wants with those amounts — what then was the situation of thousands upon thousands who did not receive even that, who received absolutely nothing? What was the situation of the sugar-cane worker who was unemployed eight months of the year, who wore no shoes, who barely had clothes to wear, who ate inadequately, who was uneducated, who had no schools, who had no medicines, who had none of these things?

We are able, of course, to answer the arguments of our enemies and to prove our

point. For without a doubt we are aided by truth and we are aided by reason itself; we are assisted by scientific concepts which are completely impervious to lies, to the campaigns conducted by our enemies. But it is an undeniable fact that the enemy takes advantage of our errors to try to sow confusion.

Revolution has made errors

Naturally, we have made errors in the process of this struggle. Whence come these errors? From the very political, economic and social conditions which the struggle produces are also produced these errors.

Then the following occurred here: in the struggle against reactionary ideas, in the struggle against imperialism, against the deserters, against conservative tendencies, which was a struggle to the death, because the life of the revolution depended upon either the triumph of the ideas of imperialism or of the socialist ideas, of the Marxist ideas; in that struggle to the death, when all our efforts, all our energy, all our attention had to be dedicated to the struggle on that front, other types of errors were being committed—errors which the revolution would have to rectify in their turn, errors which the revolution would also have to combat at the proper time.

Well then, very definite symptoms are displayed by errors, as they are by anything self-destructive, as they are by anything harmful, as they are by any disease. Some are able to see that certain errors are being made. Nevertheless, one cannot begin to fight against errors until they have become manifest, until these errors begin to engender a body of opinion, that is to say, when men become conscious of them, when the very masses —not only the leaders, but the very masses — become conscious of these errors.

We are going to speak of errors here, of errors that were committed. Nevertheless, they were errors which in truth one could not begin to combat until they became evident to everyone, until all became aware of those errors and of the negative consequences of those errors.

One of the fundamental problems produced in the struggle against reactionary ideas, against conservative ideas, against the deserters, against those who wavered, against those with negative attitudes, was sectarianism. It may be said that it was the fundamental error produced by that struggle of an ideological nature which was being waged.

That type of error was produced by the conditions in which the revolutionary process developed, and by the serious and fundamental struggle which revolutionary ideas had to wage against conservative elements and against reactionary ideas.

What tendency was manifesting itself? An opposite tendency began to manifest

itself. The tendency to mistrust everybody, the tendency to mistrust everyone who could not claim a long record of revolutionary militancy, who had not been an old Marxist militant. It is logical and, after all, it is correct to say that in certain phases of this process, in certain phases of this struggle, when a serious struggle of ideas was underway, when there was confusion, when there were many who wavered, if a *compañero* was to be named to a post of high trust, if it was a post in which an especially important job was to be done, a post requiring persons who were firm in their ideas, that is to say, persons unaffected by doubt, who did not waver, it was a correct method in order to carry out many jobs to select a *compañero* about whom, because of his record of militancy, there existed not the least doubt regarding the steadfastness of his ideas, a *compañero* who entertained no doubts as to the course of the revolution.

When it was reported: "Such and such a charge d'affaires deserted, such and such a consul deserted, such and such an attache deserted," it was inconceivable that the Republic could permit itself the luxury of naming people to posts who, because they were not politically firm and well-grounded, created scandals, embarrassed the revolution, and made it possible to believe that we had no reliable persons who could be named to these posts.

Well, that is correct. It cannot be denied that that is correct. It is true that given conditions produce given needs. But the revolution continued its forward march. The revolution became a powerful ideological movement. Revolutionary ideas slowly won the masses over. The Cuban people, in great numbers, began to accept revolutionary ideas, to uphold revolutionary ideas. That ardor, that rebelliousness, that sense of indignant protest against tyranny, against abuse, against injustice, was slowly converted into the firm revolutionary consciousness of our people.

Revolutionary ideas did not become the consciousness of a minority, of a group. They became the consciousness of the great masses of our people. Whoever doubts it, let him recall the Declaration of Havana, the Second Declaration of Havana, the presence there of a million Cubans; the enthusiasm with which those one million Cubans supported the revolutionary ideas, radical ideas, truly advanced ideas, contained in that Second Declaration of Havana; the enthusiasm with which they supported them, the evidence of political judgment they displayed as they hailed the value of each sentence.

What did this show? That the masses had become revolutionary; that the masses had embraced Marxist ideology; that the masses had embraced Marxism-Leninism. That was an unquestionable fact. The camps had been defined; the enemies had declared themselves as such; the labouring masses, the campesino, the student masses, the masses of the poor, the underprivileged masses of our nation, significant portions

of the middle class, sections of the petty bourgeoisie, intellectual workers, made Marxist-Leninist ideas their own, made their own the struggle against imperialism, made their own the struggle for the Socialist Revolution.

That was not the product of a whim; that was not something which was imposed upon the masses. The very revolutionary laws, the very accomplishments of the revolution, began to win the masses over to the revolution. They began to convert the masses into revolutionary masses. A whole series of accomplishments which began with a series of laws which benefited the people; all the laws benefited: the reduction in telephone rates, the cancellation of the corrupt contracts which the companies had obtained under the protection of the tyranny; the urban reform laws, the rent laws, beginning with the laws reducing rent and then the reduction of the price of building plots, then the urban reform law; then there were the agrarian reform laws, then the laws nationalising foreign businesses and later the laws nationalising large businesses. These became milestones marking the course of the revolution, marking the advance of the revolution, of the people.

The people developed rapidly — the people became more revolutionary by the day. When the danger of invasion began to threaten our country, when it was thought even possible that an attack would be made by the powerful forces of imperialism; when we became aware of that danger — because we will have to consider the possibility of such an attack for a long time to come — the people were mobilised, they became members of the militia. Thousands upon thousands of young men became anti-aircraft artillerymen, thousands upon thousands of workers, of poor people, became anti-tank gunners and artillerymen of various types, hundreds and thousands of men and women enrolled in the battalions, they enrolled in the combat units and they prepared to fight, if necessary, one of the greatest battles, one of the most heroic which any people could engage in.

This means that our people were prepared to take all the risks, to suffer all the consequences of their revolutionary stand, to oppose imperialism resolutely, without wavering. They were all willing to die, if necessary, in defence of the revolution and in defence of the homeland. Who will deny the enthusiasm with which the masses carried out many tasks, such as volunteering for work? They responded to every call that was made to them, to every mass meeting, to every patriotic gathering, to every revolutionary gathering.

So that when the cowardly attack of April 17 or of April 15 came, when airplanes, which came from foreign bases, attacked various places in our country; when we went to bury those companeros who had died that day, as we had gone before to bury other companeros, as we had done a few months before to bury the victims of the steamer

La Coubre, other victims of reaction, of imperialism, of the reactionaries, of the exploiters; on the eve of the battle with the imperialists — for it was not done after the battle — the socialist character of the revolution was announced; we proclaimed what was already a fact.

And who can deny it? The overwhelming enthusiasm with which the masses of workers, assembled there and formed into militia battalions, raised their rifles and resolved to fight, resolved to give combat? Who can deny the heroism with which the soldiers, members of the militia, men and women, fought? Who can deny the heroism with which the people fought the mercenaries of Playa Giron? Who can deny the selflessness, the disregard for their lives, which the men showed when they threw themselves against tanks, against enemy machine guns, as they advanced steadily across open terrain, in the face of danger from enemy bombers, advancing steadily in the face of the enemy's air attacks, despite casualties and deaths caused in their ranks by the enemy's aircraft and the enemy's shells? Who can deny this? A look at the number on the casualty list will suffice to make us understand the enthusiasm and selflessness with which the masses threw themselves into the fight. There they were, filled with enthusiasm, fighting consciously for the socialist revolution.

Qualitative change had taken place in the masses

What does this mean? This means that a great qualitative change had taken place in the masses: they had become revolutionary masses. That is a positive fact, an undeniable fact. Whoever doesn't see it that way is near-sighted. Whoever doesn't see it that way is blind. Whoever doesn't see it that way is simply an idiot.

If then that was a truth which was self-evident, could we then apply methods which were applicable to other conditions? Could we convert that system, which the needs of the struggle in a specific phase of that struggle required, that is, those methods which the needs of the struggle demanded, could we convert that into a system? Could we turn that policy into a system? Could we turn those methods for the selection of companeros for various administrative posts into a system? We could not turn those methods into a system!

It is unquestionable, and dialectics teaches us, that what in a given moment is a correct method, later on may be an incorrect one. That is what dialectics teaches us. Anything else is dogmatism, mechanism. It is a desire to apply measures which were determined by our special needs at a given moment to another situation in which the needs are different, in which other circumstances prevail. And we turned certain methods into a system and we fell into a frightful sectarianism.

What sectarianism? Well, the sectarianism of believing that the only revolutionists,

that the only *compañeros* who could hold positions of trust, that the only ones who could hold a post on a people's farm, on a cooperative, in the government, anywhere, had to be old Marxist militants. We fell into that error partly unconsciously or at least it seemed that all those problems brought about by sectarianism were problems which were the product of unconscious forces, that they came about with a fatal inevitability, that it was a virus, that it was an evil which had become lodged in the minds of many people, and that it was difficult to combat. It was truly difficult to combat until that virus manifested itself as a disease.

There are those who suffer from the grippe, but it has been incubating inside of them for ten days and they become aware of it only when they are unable to speak. There are those who incubate a tetanus infection — I don't know if for 15 or 20 days, the doctors should know how long it takes — they carry it inside of them but they never receive a single injection until the moment the infection manifests itself, until the moment they are already suffering from the disease.

We often asked ourselves: What could be the reason? Where lies the reason for that implacable, untiring, systematic, sectarian spirit which is found everywhere, which is found on all levels, which is found wherever one goes? What are the causes, the roots of this sectarian spirit? For it was difficult to believe that that spirit sprang inevitably solely from a series of circumstances.

At times one could think: Well, this is the policy of a group; this is the policy of a party; there seem to be many who are responsible for this. Of course, we have all been responsible, in some degree or other. But when we begin to analyse this problem, when the old and new *compañeros* — we have to call them something in order to distinguish between them; let us call them old and new; let us use these names for them during this broadcast and later we shall be able to find a name for all — but we were going to analyse all of this.

When that virus had already lodged in the minds of many, when that virus had already given rise to a veritable disease — because, naturally, sectarianism in and of itself is bad. It is bad for a list of reasons which we are going to enumerate later on. But above all it is bad because it creates conditions which make possible still greater evils. A disease may be bad, but it is worse if it occurs in conjunction with another disease. And so, when certain types of bodily ills are combined with others, they can cause the death of the organism. In the same way, certain political ills, when they occur together with other ills, may have very grave consequences for a revolution.

The revolution and the revolution alone was suffering from our errors and that is simply what was happening: a series of absurdities, of stupidities, of mistakes, were becoming apparent. This revolution was being sidetracked from its main trunk line

and it was traveling along a spur line. It is as if the train from Havana to Oriente — because of a wrongly-set switch in Santa Clara or in Matanzas — goes off onto a side track and ends up in the Zapata Swamp. Traveling the line we were on, we were headed for the Zapata Swamp, because we had taken a completely wrong spur line.

Deep analysis of errors

We began to analyse. It became necessary to put these matters before the *compañeros* who were taking part, of the number of *compañeros* who were participating in the National Directorate, which was composed of a smaller number. We began the unrestricted analysis of these problems, of a series of manifestations, of a series of errors, of a series of irregularities which had been taking place. We wanted to make a deep analysis, a serious analysis; we wanted to discuss, to engage in self-criticism, in other words, we wanted to analyse and to engage in self-criticism.

The spirit with which all the *compañeros* of the Directorate — both the old and the new revolutionists — participated in the analysis of all these problems was truly useful. This is not a problem concerning only the new revolutionists, nor is it one concerning only the old. This whole discussion was undertaken with zeal by all. A thorough analysis of these problems, of this process from its beginnings on the First of January 1959 was undertaken. A study of an even earlier period was undertaken in order to find the root causes of certain problems. Consequently, we reached our conclusions unanimously, *compañeros*, unanimously, *compañeros*! For these viewpoints have been discussed and approved unanimously by the old and the new revolutionists.

What was being created here? What was going on here? Where was that extreme sectarian spirit leading? Where were certain irregularities, certain distortions, leading us? We were engaged in the task, among others, of organising the political apparatus of the revolution: the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations, in other words, the ORI, the embryo, the structure of what is to become the United Party of the Socialist Revolution. We aired viewpoints, ideas, plans, and they met with the warmest enthusiasm, for there was no gathering, no mass meeting, where the plans for formation of the United Party of the Socialist Revolution were explained where they did not receive an ovation and the enthusiastic approval of the masses.

All right, then. We were all engaged in the task of organising that party. Everyone here has been fulfilling an infinite number of obligations in one field or another. Everyone has been doing his utmost to prepare our resistance to the imperialist enemy, by fighting that enemy, by fighting on the cultural front, on every front. In short, we have been engaged in great battles which have been consuming the enthusiasm — not consuming the enthusiasm, let us employ another term, because enthusiasm

has not been “consumed” nor will it ever be “consumed”. The enthusiastic attention of our *compañeros* in leading posts, of our militant *compañeros*, has been given to these tasks.

Others worked at tasks related to the formation of the party. And the party was taking shape, rather the ORI was taking shape, the ORI was being integrated. But, were we really forming a true Marxist party? Were we really constructing a true vanguard of the working class? Were we really integrating the revolutionary forces? We were not integrating the revolutionary forces. We were not organising a party. We were organising or creating or making a straitjacket, a yoke, *compañeros*. We were not furthering a free association of revolutionists, rather we were forming an army of tamed and submissive revolutionists.

Why? For a number of reasons. Sometimes a series of coincidences occur which make it possible for some *compañeros* to pervert the function of an organisation, or to inflate its functions, to waste its best opportunities, to destroy them, to make use of them in the worst possible way. And that simply was what was happening.

Why do such things happen? I am going to give my opinion — I believe that I am expressing the opinion of many *compañeros* — because those of us who are fully identified with the revolution, those of us who consider the revolution a matter of life and death, basic to each of our lives, who have made the revolution a part of our life’s blood, of our very being; those of us who love the revolution above all personal aspirations, all vanity, all personal ambition; those of us who love the revolution with the love which any man, any human being, feels for what he makes, for what he creates — the artist for his work of art, for his painting, for his statue; the father or mother for the child. Those of us who feel the revolution in that way, cannot imagine that others can see it in any other way. We cannot believe that this revolution which is so sacred to us, which has cost so much blood, which has cost so many lives, which has cost so much sacrifice and so much of our people’s energy, could be used by anyone as a pretext or as a means to satisfy his vanity, to satisfy his ambitions, to satisfy aims which are not purely and strictly of a revolutionary nature.

Why mistrust any *compañero*? Why even imagine that any *compañero* could be capable of utilising conditions which may permit him to achieve personal plans and aims, to convert this beautiful creation of the revolution, this beautiful creation of a whole people, this historic and heroic creation of the Cuban people, into a yoke, into a straitjacket, into a counter-revolutionary nightmare, into a brake on the revolution? How could we conceive such a thing?

That is how it was for many of us, for the majority, for practically all the *compañeros* of the revolution during this process of integration, or rather disintegration, of the

Revolutionary Organisations.

Very well. When we became aware of what had happened, everything was a holy mess. Forgive my irreverence. I do not mean the men who were part of the ORI. Under no circumstances am I including the people who formed part of this organisation. Men are very often the victims of the errors of others. Is it because the great majority of the people, who formed part of this organisation, were no good? No, the great majority of the people who were in it were excellent revolutionists, loyal revolutionists, loyal to socialism, loyal to Marxism, loyal to the revolution. The problem did not arise from that. The problem lay in the methods and in the goals, and in the goals which were serving as guides in the building of the apparatus.

Role of Aníbal Escalante

The *compañero* who was authorised — it is not known whether he was invested with the authority or whether he assumed it of his own accord, or whether it was because he had slowly begun to assume leadership on that front, and as a result found himself in charge of the task of organising, or of working as the Secretary in Charge of Organisation of the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations. The one who enjoyed everyone's confidence, who acted with the prestige given him by the revolution, who, while speaking with the authority of the revolution because he spoke in its name and in the name of the other *compañeros* of the revolution, the one who despite this fell, who regrettably, most regrettably, fell into the errors we have been enumerating, was the *compañero* Anibal Escalante.

This is not an easy task for anyone. It is not an easy matter for us to discuss and to explain all of these problems. Does it pain us? Of course it does. We cannot look upon Anibal Escalante as we have upon other men who once were part of the revolution and then betrayed it.

Anibal Escalante was a communist for many years. In our opinion he was a true communist, an honest communist. Has Aníbal Escalante become an anti-communist? A capitalist? No. A pro-imperialist? He has not become a pro-imperialist. Has he betrayed the revolution by going over to the enemy's camp? No, he has not betrayed the revolution by going over to the enemy's camp.

Anibal Escalante has for a long time been our *compañero* in carrying out tasks related to the direction of the revolution. More difficult still has it been for those who, being communists, worked closely with him not for one, not for two, not for three but for ten, 20 years; during years that were difficult ones for the communists, when the harassment was great, when they were heavily attacked, when the calumnies were many, when the campaigns, the efforts to isolate them, to surround them, to destroy

them were great. Anyone can understand what I mean by seeing how communists are treated in the United States today. How their leaders are treated. The communist worker loses his job; he is persecuted; they try to starve him to death. Or they do to him what they did to Henry Winston who was locked up, mistreated, until, in a display of hypocritical kindness, he was released from jail — a blind man, physically destroyed. You all know how in the capitalist countries communists are treated with hate, with cruelty.

Anibal Escalante passed through that whole period and saw his fondest dreams, what he had only seen as a hope, as an ideal of his worthy ideas, as an opportunity to transform our country from a semi-colonial country, oppressed by imperialism and capitalism, into a socialist country. He saw all this come true. Nevertheless, Anibal Escalante erred. Anibal Escalante, the communist, made grave mistakes. But this should not surprise us for the communists are human and they make errors! Is this perhaps the first time? No, the communists have erred many times. The history of the movement, of the very international communist movement, from the time that it sprang forth in the ideas and in the books, in the efforts and in the work of Marx and Engels, until the time that under Lenin it succeeded in establishing the first workers' government, it made great mistakes.

Many deserted Marxism; many attempted to revise Marxism; many made incorrect applications of Marxism. Leninism is necessarily forged in the struggle against the revisionists, against the pseudo-Marxists or mistaken Marxists.

Being a man like any other and, like any other human being, prone to error, *compañero* Anibal Escalante made great mistakes.

We reached the conclusion, we were all convinced, that *compañero* Anibal Escalante, abusing the faith placed in him, in his post as Secretary in Charge of Organisation, followed a non-Marxist policy, followed a policy which departed from Leninist norms regarding the organisation of a workers' vanguard party, and that he tried to organise an apparatus to pursue personal ends.

Conversion of sectarianism into a system

We believe that *compañero* Anibal Escalante has had a lot to do with the conversion of sectarianism into a system, with the conversion of sectarianism into a virus, into a veritable sickness during this process.

Compañero Anibal Escalante is the one responsible for having promoted the sectarian spirit to its highest possible level, of having promoted that sectarian spirit for personal reasons, with the purpose of establishing an organisation which he controlled. He is the one responsible for introducing, in addition, a series of methods within that

organisation which were leading to the creation, not of a party — as we were saying — but rather of a tyranny, a straitjacket.

We believe that Anibal Escalante's actions in these matters were not the product of oversight nor were they unconscious, but rather that they were deliberate and conscious. He simply allowed himself to be blinded by personal ambition. And as a result of this, he created a series of problems, in a word, he created veritable chaos in the nation.

Why? It's very simple. The idea of organising the United Party of the Socialist Revolution, the idea of organising a vanguard, a vanguard party, a workers' party, meets with the greatest acceptance among the masses. Marxism has the full support of the masses, Marxism-Leninism is the ideology of the Cuban people.

The establishment of the Marxist-Leninist party as the workers' vanguard party, has the full support of the people. The people approve the principle that that party should have the direction of the revolution in its hands. The people accept this basic principle of Marxism-Leninism. In such a situation, when all the people accept this principle, it was very easy to convert that apparatus, already accepted by the people, into an instrument for the pursuit of one's personal ambitions. The prestige of the ORI was immense. Any order, any directive coming from the ORI was obeyed by all. But the ORI was not the ORI.

Compañero Anibal Escalante had schemed to make himself the ORI. How? By the use of a very simple contrivance. Working from his post as Secretary in Charge of Organisation he would give instructions to all revolutionary cells and to the whole apparatus as if these instructions had come from the National Directorate. And he began to encourage them in the habit of receiving instructions from there, from the offices of the Secretary in Charge of Organisation of the ORI, instructions which were obeyed by all as if they had come from the National Directorate. But at the same time he took advantage of the opportunity to establish a system of controls which would be completely under his command.

This policy was accompanied by that sectarianism which had been encouraged to the limit, a sectarianism which tended to create conditions favorable to the achievement of those aims. And being in a position to carry it out, since he also had the task of individually organising all the revolutionary cells, a policy of license was encouraged rather than one of discipline, restraint, strict adherence to standards on the part of the organisation's militants. Rather than this, a policy of permissiveness was encouraged. Since a correct policy, adjusted to those functions proper to a workers' vanguard party, did not fit with these plans, a policy of privilege was promoted. He was creating conditions and giving instructions which tended to convert that apparatus, not into an

apparatus of the workers' vanguard, but rather into a nest of privilege, into one which tolerated favoritism, into a system of immunities and favors. Slowly he began to pervert completely the role of the apparatus.

In other words, the predominance and preponderance of the nucleus had to be created. There had to be a confusion of ideas. The idea is that the Marxist party gives guidance, that the workers' vanguard Marxist party directs the state, a direction which it can exercise only through the use of certain channels, and after receiving guidance emanating from the National Directorate. He attempted to establish a directorate on all levels. That is, something more than a directorate on all levels: a participation of the political apparatus in administrative matters, on all levels whence, with a frightful, deplorable and shameful confusion, the criterion was established that the nucleus gave all orders, that the nucleus could name and remove administrative personnel, that the nucleus governed.

And, as a result, a veritable chaos, a veritable anarchy was being introduced into the nation.

That, of course, is far removed from the idea of a workers' vanguard party, of a Marxist-Leninist party.

On the other hand, on the level of the Secretary in Charge of Organisation, it already was impossible for a minister to change an official or to change an administrator without having to call the office of the ORI, because of habits which this companero — by deceiving government officials, by making them think that he was acting under instructions from the National Directorate — tried to establish and succeeded in establishing to a large degree.

The nuclei decided and governed on all levels. When a ministry faced a problem, instead of solving it themselves, they would refer it to the ORI. This was so much so that if a cat gave birth to a litter of four kittens it was necessary to refer the matter to the ORI so they might decide upon it.

In other words, there no longer was a subject, a question, a detail, which did not first have to be discussed in the offices of the ORI. And many ministers would go there to discuss their problems; and under-secretaries no longer discussed the ministry's problems with the minister, instead they went to the offices of the ORI; and a security officer would no longer go to the offices of the security force, he went instead to the ORI.

Because of this there developed from top to bottom — don't imagine that this happened in a matter of weeks, it took months to develop — a truly abnormal, truly absurd, intolerable, chaotic, anarchic process; people were possessed of a mania for giving orders, of an eagerness to decide all problems.

And what was the nucleus? Was it a nucleus of revolutionists? The nucleus was a mere shell of revolutionists, well versed in dispensing favors, which appointed and removed officials and, as a result of this, it was not going to enjoy the prestige which a revolutionary nucleus should enjoy, a prestige born solely from the authority which it has in the eyes of the masses, an authority imparted to it by the example which its members set as workers, as model revolutionists. Instead of coming from these sources, the authority of the nucleus came from the fact that from it one might receive or expect a favor, some dispensation, or some harm or good. And as was to be expected, around the nucleus conditions were being created for the formation of a coterie of fawners, which has nothing to do with Marxism or with socialism.

And chaos reigned under those conditions. These are not the functions of the revolutionary nucleus. This is a perversion of the principles of Marxism-Leninism. This is a frightful confusion of socialist ideas. To begin with, this serves to create chaos, disaster, a monstrosity. A workers' Marxist-Leninist party directs the state, but it exercises this direction through proper channels; it exercises direction of the state through the National Directorate of that party, which has jurisdiction over the political apparatus and the public administration.

What is the function of the party? To orient. It orients on all levels, it does not govern on all levels. It fosters the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. It is the link with the masses. It educates the masses in the ideas of socialism and communism. It encourages the masses to work, to strong endeavor, to defend the revolution. It spreads the ideas of the revolution. It supervises, controls, guards, informs. It discusses what has to be discussed. But it does not have authority to appoint and to remove officials.

It is to be expected that if the nucleus is a revolutionary one it will have within it the best labourers, the best workers. It is logical, then, that when an administrator wants to choose a foreman or someone for any type of responsible position, it is logical that when he chooses one, he will find him within the nucleus because the nucleus will have gathered the most competent, the best. But the choosing will be done by the administrator, not by the nucleus. The nucleus does not have to choose officials.

This is something which we learned to expect from the PAU, from the PUR, from the old Liberal Party, from the Conservative Party, from any old corrupt political party. But this is something which we do not expect from a workers' vanguard party. This is, simply, a re-infection of old political vices which our nation has lived through. This is not the responsibility of the nucleus.

The best revolutionists, the best workers, should be in the nucleus. The party should not weaken itself in order to buttress the state apparatus. The state apparatus

must develop its own officials from the ranks. It does not have to have recourse to the nuclei in the peoples' farms, in the cooperatives. It does not have to bring in the official from the outside; he should simply be promoted from among its workers.

In any group of 500 workers, anyone may be sure of finding at least five generals, ten musicians, 20 artists. The fact is that in any mass of workers one will find an infinite variety of intelligence, of talents, of merit.

Role of party & role of state administration

Where is the person who considers himself a Marxist who can deny that among the masses one will find represented all forms of human values, all human resources, all intellectual capacities? And who will believe that the possessors of these intellectual capacities, of these merits, must be promoted by the nucleus? The nuclei must work with all the masses. They must educate all the masses, but when a personnel manager is to be appointed, when an important post is to be filled, there is no need to go to the nucleus for it to pick him. He must be picked from among the masses; he must be promoted!

That is the task of the manager; that is the task of the state administration. The personnel for the functioning of the state must be chosen from the masses themselves, and all work centres should choose their personnel from the masses of workers; they should base the promotions of their managers on the qualities they display as workers, according to their abilities. If not, it would become a problem of political chicanery, it would become a prize which someone could award. The nuclei would begin to be infested with flatterers and fawners, with position-seekers. That is not the function of the nucleus! The nucleus has other tasks. Its tasks are different from those of state administration. The party directs; it directs through the party as a whole, and it directs through the governmental apparatus.

Today an official must have authority. A minister must have authority, an administrator must have authority. He must be able to discuss whatever is necessary with the Technical Advisory Council. He must be able to discuss with the masses of workers; with the nucleus. But the administrator must decide; the responsibility must be his.

The party, through its National Directorate, endows the administrative personnel with authority. But in order to demand an accounting from them, it must endow them with true authority. If it is the nucleus which decides, if it decides at the provincial level, or at the level of the work centre, or at the local level, how then can we make the minister responsible for these decisions? He cannot be made responsible because he has no power.

The minister has the power to appoint, to remove, to appoint within the norms established by the rules and the laws of the nation. But at the same time he is charged with responsibility; he is responsible to the political administration of the revolution for his actions, for his work. In a word, he must give an accounting of his stewardship. Now, to give an accounting he must have powers.

In Cuba, as a result of this chaos, of this irregularity, of this monstrosity, no minister, no official, no administrator had power. He had to, go to the nucleus to discuss it. And we are going to give an example of this which *compañero* Carlos Rafael Rodríguez gave me today.

He found it necessary to remove — a matter which we discussed, but which did not need to be discussed — to remove the person in charge of a corporation, the Meat Corporation, because he considered him incompetent, for he was a person who really had the ability to manage only a small business, and did not have the ability required to handle the responsibilities of a gigantic undertaking like the Meat Corporation. What happened? He called him in; he informed him that he would be sent to another job which was more in consonance with his abilities. And what did the *compañero* do? He went to the nucleus in the INRA to charge that a grave injustice had been done him, and to demand that the matter be discussed with Carlos Rafael.

What a fix we'd be in! I mean that our goose would be cooked if we followed such procedures! What a sorry mix-up! To do this is to mistake the nucleus for a clique of gossipers. To do this is to mistake the nucleus for a privileged gang, for dispensers of patronage. And that habit of thinking had been introduced into the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations.

No minister could decide anything, because if the matter was not discussed with the nucleus, the offices of the ORI would have to be called. Can we imagine such a monstrosity? Can we imagine such an absurdity? *Compañeros*, can we imagine such a mess?

Things must be called by their right names. This does not mean that we are speaking with hate, nor harshly about anyone. We should analyse, censure, criticise seriously all these things.

It is logical to expect that the enemy will take advantage of these errors to sow confusion, to go about saying that the communists have taken over; that Fidel had been replaced by Blas or by Anibal, or by someone else, and Raúl by another, and so on about everyone else.

Compañeros, our enemies take advantage of our own errors, our enemies take advantage of our own stupidities. Do you want to know the reason for all those rumors? It was that obsession with command, that mania for giving orders, that

mania for governing which took possession of a certain *companionero* together with a sectarianism promoted to unheard of extremes.

Was this power real? No, it was not a real power; it was a power in form only; it was a fictitious power. There was no real power in the hands of that *companionero*. Fortunately, there was no real power! The real power did not rest there. The real power of the revolution cannot simply be usurped in that fashion. It cannot be circumvented in that way, *companioneros*. That is a ridiculous and idiotic attempt at circumvention!

But behind that there plainly was an obvious intent. Of course, that type of evil cannot be developed in our country because our country is not prone to being meek nor to being tamed. Nor are revolutionists so inclined — the large number of revolutionary *companioneros*. But through the use of deception, the attempt was made to create conditions suitable for permitting the imposition of a tyranny, of a straitjacket, of an apparatus for the serving of personal ends which, later on, would wipe out the old and new values of the revolution.

Is this perhaps a problem of command, *companioneros*? A problem of of who commands and who does not? No, *companioneros*. If this were a problem of command, of who commands and who does not, we would not be gathered here — the *companioneros* of the National Directorate, the ministers — we would not be speaking here.

Really, for us, those types of problems having to do with command and government are so trivial that we believe they are not worth an hour of bitterness to a single man, to a family, to a *companionero*. The vanity to command and to govern — if men, all men, looked at things a little philosophically, at the realities of the world, of the universe, of history — these things would not happen.

If this were simply a problem of who commands, *companioneros* — or of who governs, or of who leads, if that is what was being discussed here, and not a basic problem of revolutionary principles, not matters which concerned the essence and the very life of the revolution, we would not be here; we would not be speaking here; we would be doing something else. Because, in truth, for us those things — government in and of itself, power in and of itself — such things do not interest us.

Besides, we did not run for government office, nor did we win power in a raffle, nor anything like it. It resulted from a series of historical circumstances, from a series of deeds. It resulted from a revolutionary process — some happened to play a certain role and others played another. Perhaps one of the most difficult roles fell to our lot, because these matters, these obligations carry with them difficult moments, moments like the present one, like many others that we have had!

If the matters here under discussion were matters concerning power and who

governs, it would be well for any one of us to exercise his right to retire, to renounce all posts and everything else.

If matters which are basic for our nation were not under discussion, matters which are basic for our revolution, for the welfare of our nation; if to avoid such matters would not mean that the revolution was headed toward an abyss, toward a bottomless pit, toward its own destruction, *compañeros*, these matters would not have to be laid open here, these matters would not have to be discussed, people would not have to be made aware of these matters.

It is not important who governs — what man governs or what his name might be. Who leads is not important — what man leads or what his name might be. The important thing is that he govern well; the important thing is that he lead the revolution where the revolution should go.

It was important to discuss this problem because it was vital to the revolution, basic for the revolution, simply because it was imperative to correct those errors, that incorrect and absurd policy, forced here into the midst of a revolutionary process filled with glory and greatness. The conditions which made possible such a state of affairs had to be rooted out and the conditions which permitted the organisation and the functioning of a true workers' vanguard party had to be created.

'Implacable, insatiable, incessant sectarianism'

It is natural that this should create a frightful sectarianism. This explains why that sectarianism was encouraged. This explains why that implacable, insatiable, incessant sectarianism, which was in evidence everywhere, appeared in every nook and cranny of the country, from one end of the country to the other, from the Punta de Maisi to Cabo de San Antonio [the east and west extremities of Cuba]. A series of attitudes, a series of deeds, was everywhere evident. Because that did not promote a true integration, *compañeros*. That introduced extraneous matter into the integration process and compelled the forces which had to integrate, which had to fuse to function as forces which had not integrated, which had not fused, and so, many months after the forces had been officially integrated one found someone who would come out and say: "No, not this one because he's not a member of the party." To what "party" was he referring if there already was a new organisation here? "No, not this one because he's a member of the party" and again "He's from the party, from the party." And a veritable chaos began to be created.

This, naturally, was added to a whole series of contradictions. It was added on to a whole series of problems, to a long list of subjects, arguments, wrongs.

We have referred to this on some other occasion and we severely criticised any

type of sectarianism, the sectarianism of those who had fought in the mountains and the sectarianism of those who had been militants for 20 years.

On December 2 or 3, on the day we spoke of Marxism-Leninism, we explained here how we had to fight against all types of sectarianism, against the one who had been a militant for 20 years and against the one who said, "I fought in the mountains." And we have been unyielding in our criticism of all those who espoused the sectarianism of those who had been in the mountains. We criticised them severely and we were firm. We did not tolerate those manifestations of sectarianism. We criticised them very severely. And we always called on the people to unite, and we always told the people that all those who did not have the opportunity to fight before should not be discouraged, that ahead of them there were many opportunities, that all of history before them waited to be written, that the revolution had barely begun and a long road lay ahead of us.

And we censured the folly of individuals who flaunted in others' faces that sectarianism born of the fact that they had fought in the mountains; that he had been in the mountains; that he had been here and had been there. This is all well and good, but another type of sectarianism arose: the sectarianism of the 15- and 20-year militant, which was not opposed at the proper time, which was not opposed correctly, *compañeros*; forgetting the fact that the number of communists in our country was very small, because the enemy, as we have explained on more than one occasion, did not let up on his slanderous campaigns against Marxism, against socialism. It created very difficult conditions; it surrounded and isolated the Marxist-Leninist party in our country.

When a whole people becomes revolutionary, when a whole people, that is to say, when the immense majority of our people, embraces Marxism-Leninism, how absurd is it then to fall into the sectarianism of the "old militants"; to boast about the number of years of one's militancy; to see it manifest itself in the work centres! And then for everyone to become aware that it was more than a verbal sectarianism, that in order to hold a post of personnel director, to be able to fill certain posts in factories or in offices, the best-paid jobs, one had to belong to that sect. I do not mean by this that I am calling the old Marxist-Leninist party a sect; rather I call the spirit which they created, or which was created after integration, the spirit of a sect.

What hope remained for the great masses of labourers, for the great masses of workers? What kind of situation did millions of citizens find themselves in? For, while the old communists had been only a few thousand, the people, who had embraced the cause of Marxism-Leninism, had been integrated by the millions.

It requires little intelligence — if a little is all one has — to realise that application of

such a policy upon someone's flaunting his record of militancy, accompanied by the fact that lack of that stamp of approval in that sect was enough to leave people without the least hope of being chosen for anything, either for a post as technician, for a responsible post on a state farm, on a cooperative, in municipal or provincial government, in the JUCEI [Coordination, Application and Inspection Council, or in the national government. The folly, the idiocy, the negative nature and the stupidity of such a policy then became obvious.

To what did such a state of affairs give rise? To vanity, to a domination of influence, to privilege. What would this engender but conditions which would earn the old communists the antipathy and the suspicion of the masses? What else would it produce but the conditions which, moreover, were going to lead an old communist to take the wrong course, the wrong road in his life, in his work, in his attitude?

Add to this the indulgence of errors. Add to this the fact that if an old communist made mistakes, nothing was done to him; he was not removed from his post, nor was he disciplined in any way; on the contrary, his errors were tolerated, no matter what the error, the abuse or the injustice committed.

Of course, that was not a policy applied to the masses, nor was it generalised, but it was an established method for the indulgence of all faults: to create a caste spirit, to create a clique spirit, because all of that fitted very well with a policy which aimed at creating an apparatus for the satisfaction of personal ambitions and aims. It is evident that not only was the privilege of a sect created but also indulgence of all faults; *compañeros* were appointed to many posts who, in many cases, lacked the capacity to fill them. This was not so in other cases, let us be fair.

They forgot the sacrifices the revolution had cost

Those were the results. It was natural that a feeling of great personal power was created, and this was so much so that some *compañeros* had lost all sense of control. They imagined that they had won the revolution in a raffle. At least, that is the way they acted, forgetting the blood which was spilled, the sacrifices which this revolution had cost.

I am going to cite some examples, I am going to cite an example from Oriente Province of a certain gentleman who is Secretary, or was Secretary of the Sectional Committee of Bayamo and who was later appointed ORI Secretary of no less than of a group of peoples' farms of El Cauto; a gentleman by the name of Fidel Pompa — he's probably still there as secretary — who was appointed to such an important post by mysterious and extraordinary means, by the use of that sectarian magic and of the cult of personality, of the true cult of personality, not what some entirely mistaken

individuals take to be the cult of personality.

When the list of *compañeros* who had been appointed to the National Directorate appeared, this gentleman, evidencing the mentality of a Nazi gauleiter and not the mentality of a Marxist — for there were gentlemen who were assuming the airs of gauleiters and not those of Marxist militants — took the liberty of commenting before two *compañeros*, who had been placed in charge of that administrative board, and before a Spanish technician who works there with them; he took the liberty of making comments like the following when he saw the list: “What is this filthy fat man doing here?” — he was referring to *compañero* Aragones. He also used another word which I don’t want to repeat in public. “And who is this Guillermo Garcia?” he said. “Where did this person come from?” “And this Sergio del Valle, who is he?” “And this Haydee Santamaria, what is she doing here?” Those were the observations made by this individual.

Who was this individual? Why didn’t he know Haydee Santamaria? Why didn’t he know Guillermo Garcia? Why didn’t he know Sergio del Valle? Why didn’t he know anybody? Simply because when the people were fighting here, he was under the bed.

How was he to know that Guillermo Garcia was the first campesino to join the revolutionary forces, a man who earned his rank by fighting in battle after battle, in a war which lasted 25 months? How was he to know that he was one of the few who joined the fight and survived? He was a comrade in countless battles, modest, of extraordinary merits in this revolution. How was he to know Sergio del Valle, a doctor who, after the battles were over, stayed alone with the wounded, surrounded by the troops of the tyranny, attending to the sick, saving lives, and that he later joined the combat forces and marched with Camilo Cienfuegos as second-in-command of that glorious invasion, thereby earning great prestige and the admiration of all? How was he to know Sergio del Valle if he was under the bed? If I use the same word repeatedly it is simply because it is the only word that fits.

How was he to know Haydee Santamaria, the *compañera* who saw her brother die, a brother whom she loved profoundly; the *compañera* who was shown the gouged-out eyes of her brother whom she deeply loved; the steadfast *compañera*, the loyal *compañera*, the *compañera* who did not weaken through a whole process of difficult and bloody struggle; the heroic *compañera* whose name appeared very often during the years of struggle? How is this gentleman to know the names of these people without whom, without whose efforts, he might still possibly be under the bed?

From the Cauto River this gentleman was only a day’s march from the Sierra Maestra. It shouldn’t have been too much for him to grab a knapsack, when Cowley was murdering workers and campesinos; when Cowley murdered Loynas Echevarria

and so many other militant revolutionists whom he killed in a cowardly and cruel manner in a single night; when the workers, the campesinos, the students were being murdered by the thousands, and he had only to walk one day in order to join the revolutionary forces.

What right does this gentleman have now, like a *gauleiter*, to pass judgment on historic names, and not only that but to say at the end of his commentary: "Well, we are going to sweep out all of these people, little by little." What is this? What true Marxist can act that way? What true communist can have a mind like that — ridiculous, vain, immoral, grotesquely absurd? What communist what true revolutionist can be such an ingrate?

And what should the proper attitude be for a man who saved his own skin while others were dying? He should at least have a little respect, a little modesty; he should be a little less overbearing.

Men like Fidel Pompa are not the only ones; there are more. Those are the individuals whom we have to find inside the organization! And those are the individuals whom we have to sweep out; those are the ones whom we really have to sweep out, to sweep out!

I would never fall into the error of comparing such a despicable character with any good communist. My concept of what constitutes a communist is much too high, of what constitutes a true communist, of how the communists have had to struggle everywhere, of the millions of heroes, of the martyrs whom the proletarian fighters have lost along the way. The memory of Stalingrad is too strong in my mind. The memory of the 18 million Soviet people who fell is too strong in my mind. The memory of Julius Fucik is too much before me. The memory of so many international communists, that is, of those of other countries and of the communists of our own country, of those who were murdered in the month of December by Cowley's hordes, of Jesus Menendez, of Mella, of Villena, of Jose Maria Perez, of so many others who were murdered, proletarian fighters who fell while serving the cause of Marxism, their memory is too much in my mind for me to fall into the error of thinking for even a minute that a true communist could be compared with such a despicable character.

But how could such a contemptible character be appointed to a responsible post? How could he be appointed secretary of such an important group of organizations? This was made possible by the conditions to which we referred earlier, by that sectarian policy, by that egotistical policy, by that wrong policy, by that misguided policy.

And through the use of such people an apparatus can be built up, through that and through the exploitation of Marxism's prestige, through the exploitation of the authority which the revolution enjoys with the people, through the exploitation of the authority

which revolutionary ideas have with the masses, through the creation of conditions which will permit individuals such as this one to exert undue influence. And in this way a party of tamed and unconditional followers, of conceited individuals, of vain individuals, can be built up. This is not the only case. There are others which can be cited.

Like the other individual, who, at a dinner in one of the embassies after my speech of March 13, asserted that Fidel had spoken for — that “what Fidel said had value for that part of the masses which followed him.” And what could the other part of the masses be, the part which does not really follow him? The one which doesn’t follow the line of the revolution?

That man is called Varela — let’s call them by their names, so that these mistaken people may be known by all — and he’s a swindler who works in the Foreign Ministry and who, so, they say, is a bit of a soak.

We speak for the revolutionary masses

But, well, these characters are overbearing in their ways. “Fidel spoke for that part of the masses which follows him.” What do I care, individually and personally, whether the masses do as I say. That is important only from a revolutionary point of view. But the gentlemen who think in that way forget the masses who followed the revolutionary line, the masses who, acting with the strength of a torrent, wiped out the tyranny, who wiped out imperialist domination in our country; these masses who have not been betrayed; these masses who gave us a great many attributes, a great deal of power, a power which we have not abused, a power which we have shared, a power which we have tried to use for the wellbeing of our country. We have not used it to advance any personal ends, because, after all is said and done, what personal benefits could we gain from this struggle? We, who have been fortunate to see so many dreams, so many expectations, so many hopes realized, who have had the privilege which neither Marti, nor Maceo, nor Maximo Gomez, nor Guiteras, nor Mella, nor Cespedes, nor Agramonte, nor any of our Founding Fathers have had. We who have seen our flag waving as a completely free, independent and sovereign flag, who have seen the name of our nation circle the globe, filled with prestige, to what personal benefits could we aspire?

We do not speak for that part of the masses which follows us. With honesty, honesty and forthrightness, free of passion and egotism, we speak for the revolutionary masses, as revolutionary leaders should speak.

And similarly, how many other things had like origins? Like those who, in a high fever after having barely read a little Marxist book, or having read it before and not

having understood it, went about saying that *History Will Absolve Me* was a reactionary document.

Very well now, how could that gentleman presume to know so much about philosophy and revolution? No, sir. We do not expect that *History Will Absolve Me* will come to be considered a Marxist classic. No, sir. Speaking in all modesty, *History Will Absolve Me* is the expression of a progressive mind, of an evolving revolutionary mind. It was not yet the expression of a Marxist mind but it was the expression of the mind of a young man who was leaning towards Marxism and who was beginning to act like a Marxist. But its value does not lie in its theoretical, economic and political content.

Its lasting value resides in that it was a living denunciation of all the errors and crimes of the tyranny, that it exposed that regime so atrociously cruel and cowardly, so tyrannical and murderous. But, above all, the little merit which *History Will Absolve Me* may have rests simply in that it was a denunciation made in the midst of a hundred soldiers' bayonets, of soldiers whose hands had been stained with the blood of 80 of our *companeros*.

The voicing of that denunciation there — today anyone can get up on a platform and deliver a great speech, calmly, without difficulty, without policemen, without a shot being fired, without receiving any blows. But to have voiced it under those conditions, where there was no guarantee for anyone's life, to denounce those things then was a task a bit more difficult than that of posing as a revolutionist now.

History Will Absolve Me does not have to be read in the schools for revolutionary instruction. It is not a Marxist classic. It is the expression of a developing mind, of a series of ideas which have been a constant concern of revolutionists. And it is a living denunciation made when that denunciation had to be made, at the risk of one's life.

If we followed that line it could be said that *The Manifesto of Monte Cristi* [issued by Jose Marti and Maximo Gomez in the Dominican Republic prior to Marti's sailing for Cuba in 1895] was a reactionary document; that the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789 was a reactionary document. What trash, what sawdust must have gotten into the brain of a person who thinks that way.

And there was another individual who said that the attack on the Moncada Barracks had been an error; that the Granma landing had been an error. Very well. We are not interested in these matters from a personal point of view and if we discuss them we do so merely to analyse them because we must be rid, once and for all, of all these people who talk so much trash. Let us be rid of all these babblers!

We, and only we, after all the experience we have acquired, after all that we have learned of military matters in this struggle, have a right to discuss and to determine

whether, under given conditions and in the light of our present experience, we would undertake the attack on the Moncada Barracks; whether we would carry out the landing from the Granma in the way we did or in some other. Of course, we have much more experience now than we had then. Well then, if we had now the same experience that we had then, it is quite possible that we would do again what we did then.

But now, with our present experience and enriched by that experience —and who will deny that men act precisely in accordance with what they know and in accordance with existing conditions — one could calmly begin to analyse these tactics better; one might decide to attack another barracks instead of this one, or to swim in; instead of coming by boat, one might come in by airplane, or by infiltration; one could become a frogman and land on the coast. In short, one could have done any one of these things.

What is at issue in the matter of the Moncada Barracks and the Granma are not the deeds but the line, the correct line, the line of armed struggle; not the corrupt political line, the electioneering line, but the line of armed struggle against the Batista tyranny, a line which history proved to be the correct one.

Is it possible to be so deaf, so blind, so nearsighted and so idiotic as to ignore the lessons of history, and to be unable to draw the lessons which are to be drawn from history?

I bring up these cases in order to cite a few examples. People argue many foolish things! They argue about things they don't understand. They argue about history, about the role of each organisation and of each thing. And to what purpose? Some day history will be written objectively. History may be made; the people, the masses, make history. We have said it before and we believe that the masses are the makers of history; they are the architects of history. Now, history may be made, but it cannot be falsified. It may be made but it cannot be rewritten. There is only one history, and you cannot write it according to your subjective wishes. And all subjective histories must be discarded in order to make way for all real history, all true history.

The revolution is the result of a long process of struggle which began with our forefathers in 1868 and which comes to fruition today, now, and which will continue to advance. It had different stages, different battles. The history of the present stage began on the 26th of July 1953 as the history of the struggle of 1868 began on the 10th of October of 1868 and that of the War of Independence, or what was called the War of Independence, began on February 24, 1865.

That is the true history. Why then argue the matter? What does all this display of eagerness serve? What is gained by that? What do we win by that? And some day the

history of the Cuban nation will have to be written. Some day the history of political ideas, the history of the present period will have to be written and then the role played by everyone, the value of everyone's efforts, without denying anybody his just deserts, will be known.

And when the history of political ideas is written, who will be able to deny Mella's worth? Who will be able to deny the worth of the founders of the Cuban Marxist-Leninist party, of the extraordinary role which they played in disseminating Marxist, anti-imperialist and socialist ideas among the workers, among the people? All this is aside from all the rest of the effort, aside from their love for their work among the workers during the revolution.

Some day true and objective history will be written. Perhaps we ourselves will help to write it because some day, when we no longer have before us the matters which we have today, we will discuss, analyse, criticise calmly, quietly, objectively, honestly, the errors made and the successes achieved and everything else. We will undertake the writing of the objective history of our country.

Why go around arguing? What do we gain by that? Why, if no one wants to deny anyone his just due? Why go around playing the role of the philosophers of history, when in reality we may be playing the role of the fools of history? These are useless arguments!

We, the revolutionary leaders, one day will have to sit down to discuss in order to draw those lessons that were useful for our generation, for future generations, for the peoples of our sister republics of Latin America, so that they may draw the pertinent lessons from our successes and from our errors.

We have never found ourselves in that situation. We have always "rendered unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and to God that which is God's."

Of course, it was important that we speak of these things one day.

Compañeros who made the revolution sidelined

I have some further things to say. This whole attitude gives rise to injustices, to errors, to mistakes. As an example, we may cite the injustices committed against many of those who were old *compañeros* of the Rebel Army. One day we went to a place where we met more than 100 officers whom we had seen participate in many battles. — What are you doing now? Aren't you leading troops? — No.

What happened to these *compañeros*? Well, because they were of a "low political level" they were not placed in charge of troops. Ah! A "low political level". And what is a "low political level"? How are they going to come around now and speak of "low" and "high political levels" when we are dealing with *compañeros* who made the revolution

, who fought the war and brought it to a successful conclusion, who have led, who have made possible the triumph of the socialist revolution?

How could one have fought for a socialist revolution and then have someone say that those who struggled and fought for that revolution and were loyal to that revolution and who, in moments when people might be expected to waver, did not waver, and who were always ready to die, and who mobilised themselves when the mercenaries came, and who died fighting the mercenaries after it had been declared that this was a socialist revolution. How could they be removed from their commands for being of a “low political level” and then put in his place some bachelor of arts who can recite from memory a Marxist catechism even though he doesn’t apply it? So, any bachelor of arts whatever, who didn’t fight and who never felt any inclination to fight, that bachelor of arts has a higher political level and should be in charge of troops! Is this Marxism? Is this Leninism?

Then, how many *compañeros*, even Camilo Cienfuegos, would have been removed by them from the command of a column of invaders or of a body of troops. And they probably would have placed in command any bachelor of arts who could speak a little better, who could parrot Marxist and Leninist matters a little better.

When Camilo was placed in command of the Invasion Column [the section of the Rebel Army which in 1958 carried the revolution from the Sierra Maestra to central Cuba], we, who knew that he was a revolutionist of integrity, completely honest, conscious that he was fighting for a just cause, with a complete revolutionary soul, with the makings of a communist, for that is how Camilo was — one must see his books, his writings, his unifying spirit expressed in his letters when he spoke of Felix Torres when he was with him in Las Villas — we did not say to that generous, heroic *compañero*, who was a lion in battle, who was all agility and expertness, who extricated his troops from difficult situations, we did not say to him: “Recite Capital!” Rather, the only thing that interested us when we appointed him was to know who he was, what stuff he was made of and to know that he had the ability to lead those troops to Pinar del Rio Province, where he would have led them if he had not received orders to remain in Las Villas.

Perhaps, now, as a result of those paradoxes and ironies; someone might come around to give him a test on Marxism-Leninism and he would have failed it, and he would have handed the command of his troops over to some bachelor of arts who had received a little military training. And something similar might have happened to Ciro Frias, to Ciro Redondo, to Paz, to so many others who fell, who were of campesino origin, of humble beginnings, who fought because they bore in their consciousness the spirit and instinct of rebellion of the exploited class, who were fighters for their class,

heroes of their class.

How absurd to find that men who were willing to die to make possible a revolution such as this one, who would have given their lives for it, that in spite of this they would have to be removed from command of their troops because of their low political level! I say that that is a folly, an injustice, a policy lacking in Marxist, proletarian, Leninist sense.

And these things have happened, *compañeros*, and it is the product of a sectarianism which we should eradicate.

They are truly painful, inevitable corrections which we should make.

Very well, then, how could such things happen in a party? There you have that matter which has been discussed so much, the problem of the cult of personality. Perhaps an example of what we, or at least of what I, understand as the cult of personality could serve as the subject of a good lesson for political instructors to give the troops and for principals to give in the schools, which has nothing to do with the prestige of the leaders, which has nothing to do with the authority of the leaders, as it seems some, thinking in reverse, have thought. Who thought about the things that were happening, things which were not so difficult to see? Recently, we could, at least, see this phenomenon in operation. Most likely there were some who thought that these problems had to do with us; who thought that we had to be watched to see if we were likely to fall into the errors of the cult of personality.

Of course, such an idea, such a doubt, never entered our minds, because we know that those problems do not exist in our country, rather the reverse. Now I ask myself: Why did we argue so much about this problem, if we were incapable of seeing what was happening before our very noses? Certainly this problem did not arise from the danger that the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government would allow himself to be seduced by the cult of personality.

Whether we wanted to or not, even if we ourselves did not want to, they do not interest us, honestly; those problems do not interest us personally. They interest us only from the point of view of whether or not they can do harm or good to the revolution, whether they can be useful or useless to the people, to the present generation, the coming generations.

But for the benefit of those through whose minds there might pass the thought that we could even remotely be suspect of having such inclinations, it is good to recall certain deeds, certain deeds as evidenced by the fact that we waged a war, we led it, we won it, and there are no general's stars on our shoulders and no medals hang from our chests. And the first law which we proposed when we assumed governmental power prohibited the erection of statues — these problems related to the cult of

personality were not discussed as much then as they are now — but out of deep conviction we proposed prohibiting the erection of statues of living persons, naming streets after living persons and, what is more, that the placing of our portraits in government offices be prohibited by law. This we did from deep conviction, from deep revolutionary conviction. Was this demagogy? No. We acted this way from profound revolutionary conviction.

Great responsibilities fell on our shoulders. The masses of our country placed great powers in our hands which we have shared with others as it was fitting that we should do, as it was correct for us to do, as it was our duty to do.

I believe sincerely and firmly in the principles of collective leadership but no one forced me to do so, rather it came from a deep and personal conviction, a conviction with which I have known how to comply. I believe what I said on December 2: I believe in collective leadership; I believe that history is written by the masses; I believe that when the best opinions, the opinions of the most competent men, the most capable men, are discussed collectively, that they are cleansed of their vices, of their errors, of their weaknesses, of their faults. I also believe that neither the history of countries, nor the lives of nations, should be dependent on individuals, on men, on personalities. I state that which I firmly believe.

Why do I make this clear? Very well, because we have also made, among others, this error. We have many things to discuss about the problems of Marxism, about the whole rich and vital history of Marxism, about the struggle of Marxism against the revisionist, against the perverters of its principles. We have much to learn from Lenin, much to learn from the history of Marxism from its beginnings to the present day.

Many times in the schools, in many places we have discussed this same subject of the cult of personality excessively, to our way of thinking. Not because it bothers us, *compañeros*. As far as we are concerned people can discuss these problems till they breathe their last; it doesn't bother us.

But I ask myself the following question: Why have we been discussing a problem so much which was not our problem but the Soviet Union's? All right. We should be well informed. We should inform, discuss, if they are problems which have to do with the experience of Marxism, but we didn't have to turn it into the central theme of our discussions. For we have much more important things to discuss and this means that we are doing something like the following: that we are waging a campaign against the bubonic plague when, instead of the bubonic plague, there is malaria and poliomyelitis. It is true we don't want to be attacked by the bubonic plague, and we should be vaccinated against it and take the necessary measures and, in addition, we should know what the bubonic plague is. But when we have to fight we should fight against

malaria and poliomyelitis which are the actual and present ills.

Those evils have not been a threat in our country. The only danger there was was the one we did not see. How blind we were! What a difference between theory and practice! What a good lesson! Much discussion was conducted on a subject while, all the time, we ran the risk of misleading many people and yet, no matter how much we discussed the subject, we did not see the evil that was close by.

Cult of prsonality?

Many were saying: “The cult of personality — is the same thing going to happen here as in the Soviet Union? Could the Prime Minister be one of those who will have to be watched to prevent his falling into the evils of the cult of personality?”

Very well. I don't think that there was a show of bad faith in this, nor anything like it. I am sure that the problem here was not one of a lack of information. These matters were amply discussed. But the point is that there are many people around who are on the wrong track; there are many people who are confused as to what are the most timely subjects, the most basic. We lack skills; we exercise no care and we get off the right track. That is why we take the wrong train.

To my mind many of those rumors, all those campaigns, and this whole problem which was taking shape within our country has to do, in part, with the undue discussion of a subject which should not have been the principal subject of our discussion.

And it is clear that what took place in an unconscious and spontaneous manner aided in the creation of the other problem, of the other phenomenon: the destruction of the prestige of the revolution. Why? For the more prestige the revolution has, so much the better; the more voices, which speak with authority, possessed by the revolution, so much the better. For it is not the same to have a choral group of ten people as it is to have one of 300. When you see a choral group of ten members it is good, but one of 300 voices is much better, more beautiful, more excellent. If we have one leader, two, ten, with prestige, we should have more leaders with prestige. We should not destroy those leaders who have prestige. What happens if we destroy them? Then, unfortunately, when difficult times come the people do not have anyone in whom to believe. When we have to face situations similar or worse to what we faced at Playa Giron, when all at once we have to face situations ten times worse than what we faced at Playa Giron, then we have to speak with the people; we have to appeal to the people's faith.

And what do we gain by sowing the least doubt? What do we gain by destroying the prestige of the revolution?

Of course, I do not place the least blame on any honest revolutionist, on any of the

many *compañeros*, on any of those who have spoken on this subject. No, but I understand, *compañeros*, that conditions were being created that unfortunately that discussion — the same thing would result if we started now discussing things which must be discussed later on. For to discuss them now would cause damage. They would not be in consonance with present needs.

Later on we will discuss other problems which existed at the time those discussions were undertaken for, unfortunately, they coincided with certain campaigns which were directed against certain *compañeros*, campaigns which were being conducted in a very subtle manner, certain campaigns that were directed against the prestige of certain well-known and very valuable *compañeros* which sprang from the same problem which we have posed; a series of subtle campaigns directed against a number of very valuable *compañeros* of the revolution, conducted, *compañeros*, by those who were promoting the same sectarian policy.

How did this affect the masses? Well, clearly this discouraged the masses. Did this turn the masses against the revolution? No, the masses did not turn against the revolution, the masses are with the revolution and they will always be with the revolution, in spite of its errors. But they cooled the enthusiasm of the masses; they cooled the fervour of the masses.

How did this affect the political organisation of the revolution? Very simply, *compañeros*. We were not creating an organisation; I already said that we were preparing a yoke, a straitjacket. I'm going to go a little further: we were creating a mere shell of an organisation. How? The masses had not been integrated. We speak here of the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations. It was an organisation composed of the militants of the Partido Socialista Popular.

The rest of the organisations, the Student Directorate, the 26th of July, what were they? Were they organisations which had an old organised membership? No. They were organisations which had great mass support, they had an overwhelming mass support. That is what the 26th of July was; that is what the other organisations were. They enjoyed great prestige, great popularity. These people were not organised into an organisation.

If we are going to form an organisation, an integration, and we do not integrate the masses, we will not be integrating anything; we will be falling into a sectarianism like that we fell into.

Then how were the nuclei [the cells of the Integrated Revolutionary Organisation] formed? I'm going to tell you how. In every province the general secretary of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in all the nuclei, the general secretary of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in every municipality, the general secretary

of the PSP was made general secretary of the ORI; in every nucleus, the general secretary — the member of the PSP — was made general secretary of the nucleus. Is that what you would call integration? *Compañero* Anibal Escalante is responsible for that policy.

What resulted from this? What consequences did it have? All that we have done to fight against anti-communism, the ideological struggle, the incessant explaining, which slowly destroyed anti-communism — for anti-communism, as we ourselves have said, engendered sectarianism in its turn, because the isolated, harassed Marxist-Leninists tended to protect themselves closely within their own organisation, to shut themselves up in their organisation.

Sectarianism gives rise to anti-communism

Very well. Those are the consequences of anti-communism, of harassment; they engender sectarianism. Once anti-communism is wiped out, if extreme sectarianism still remains, it will once again give rise to anti-communism and to confusion. Because many people will ask: “Is this communism? Is this Marxism? Is this socialism? — this arbitrariness, this abuse, this privilege, all this, is this communism?”

“If this, is communism”, they will say along with the Indian Hatuey, “then ...” When the Indian Hatuey was being burned at the stake, a priest came up to him to ask him if he wanted to go to heaven, and he said, “No, I don’t want to go to heaven if heaven is all of this.” Do you understand me? I have to speak clearly.

No one should have the least doubt, and I think that anyone who has it now must be completely crazy — let’s use that word. At the present time I must speak with extraordinary objectivity, but with an extraordinary objectivity, frankness, loyalty, honesty, keep back nothing. Because we will make sure that our words will not be misunderstood, *compañeros*.

Very well, then, that sectarianism fosters anti-communism anew. What Marxist-Leninist mind could think of employing— when the socialist revolution is in power— the methods employed when Marxism-Leninism was not in power, when it was completely surrounded and isolated? To isolate oneself from the masses when one is in power, that is madness. It is another matter to be isolated by the ruling classes, by the exploiters, when the latifundistas [great landowners] and the imperialists are in power; but to be divorced from the masses when the workers, the campesinos, when the working class is in power, is a crime. Then sectarianism becomes counter-revolutionary because it weakens and harms the revolution.

What should be the ideal of a Marxist-Leninist? “These are my ideals, this is my cause.” For many years we were but a handful — 10,000, 15,000 of those who were

truly Marxist-Leninists. How then, at the very time in which that same cause, his cause, his standard, his ideal, is the ideal of three million Cubans, is he going to isolate himself from the masses and act exactly as he did when there were 5000, 10,000 or 15,000? That is a gigantic error. To fall into an error of that nature is a crime, a counter-revolutionary crime. How can we do that when we can count on the strength of the masses?

The organisational framework for those masses must be built. That framework must be built with new forces, with new cadres, not with a reduced number of cadres as when the organisation was very small, when the Marxist-Leninist party had a few thousand adherents. When Marxism-Leninism has millions of adherents in our country, the framework for those millions must be built. To do otherwise is, as we have said on other occasions, like wanting to empty the Cauto River [Cuba's longest river], I mean, like wanting to empty the Amazon River into the Cauto River, like wanting to empty a vat into a cask and like wanting to build a 40-story building on top of a building having only two stories. It would come crashing down *compañeros!* It would mean isolation from the masses!

And we have fallen into that error. From the Marxist-Leninist point of view that is a grave error, an unforgivable error, an error which must be corrected.

What was the result of this? Very simply. The organisation of the revolutionary nuclei was begun, but the nuclei were secret; they were secret. Can you conceive of secret contacts with the masses? And can you conceive of forming a secret nucleus exactly as it would have been formed under Batista? That is to say, nuclei which the masses did not know?

And then, what did we do? Well, in a work centre with 5000 workers we had a nucleus with seven members. Begging *compañero* Llanusa's pardon I am going to cite the case of the Sports Palace.

Garrucho and two women to whom he gave employment — Who is Garrucho? We are not going to argue over who Garrucho was. Garrucho was elected councilman on the PUR [Partido Union Revolucionario — a Batista party] ticket in the year 1954. Then the branch of the Partido Socialista Popular of Regla made an error, to our way of thinking — we should speak with frankness for we are neither accusing, nor blaming anyone, nor anything like it. Let us forget all that. Now we should all speak about all things without prejudice, without vacillation. They erred because he repented, because the man said that he was willing to resign. And then he was made a member of the Partido Socialista Popular. Well, then he was allowed to remain at his post. I don't know but to my mind that was a wrong tactic for the branch to use — it was the branch, not the party — but the fact is that that man filled the post of councilman up to the very

31st of December j95.

Then all of a sudden, in spite of the hatred in which the councilmen of the PAU [Partido Accion Unitaria — like the PUR, one of Batista's parties] and the PUR were held, and all that had anything to do with them, we find that man promoted from councilman — hero of the PUR to revolutionary leader. Very well. This could be explained. It was the result of an error. It is undeniable that it was an error to admit him — it is the same as — well, why should I cite examples. I have one but I do not want to remember those poor people now, for I am going to hurt them for no reason at all.

Well then, Garrucho ended up in the INDER [National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation]. He brought a secretary and another girl to work there. I believe they are excellent girls; nothing is known against them. And there Garrucho turned out to be an important functionary. He was sent from the office of the provincial government or from who knows where to Llanusa and he was given an important post.

When we went to see the kind of nucleus that the INDER had, we found that it consisted of seven members out of 400 employees. And there were 20 or 30 excellent, superb people, and they were only seven: Garrucho, the two women, Llanusa, his secretary and two old communists, Ezequiel Herrera and Pancho Lopez. That was the nucleus. That was our contact with the masses there, our secret contact with a mass consisting of 400 employees. Would you call that a political apparatus?

Very well, Llanusa formed part of the nucleus because he was Llanusa and he was the director of the INDER, and I believe that *compañero* Llanusa has a right to belong to the nucleus. As to the secretary, well I believe she belonged because she was Llanusa's secretary, although I understand that she is an excellent girl. But there were others who were not lucky enough to be Llanusa's secretary. There were other excellent girls there but since they did not enter with Garrucho they could not form part of the nucleus. And there were two old communists there. One, Ezequiel Herrera, an excellent worker, who was proclaimed as a model worker there by the masses. What a joy, what a feeling of satisfaction we experienced when we saw a member of the nucleus proclaimed there a model worker by the masses! That was Ezequiel Herrera. Pancho Lopez was also proclaimed a model worker. I understand that he ended up there after a bit of trouble in the G-2 [Security Police] or some other place. But Pancho was also there. They say that he is a good *compañero*. But he was there in the nucleus. He was one of the "seven privileged ones of the nucleus".

And who was Ezequiel Herrera? They say that Garrucho himself had proposed replacing him with one of his own cousins even though he was an old militant. That is what *compañero* Llanusa told me. I don't know if he will confirm it. We are not going

to — everything that is said here, has good witnesses to support it, so there is no danger that we are going to invent anything here.

Then we went to Ambar Motors. Now Ambar Motors is a place which has a larger proportion of workers than the INDER. We were going to have a meeting. The nine-member nucleus had been formed there also. Well, what is the use of talking?

The nucleus consisted of nine members using the same system: the *compañero* director, the secretary of the director, the director's brother-in-law. Of course, I want to point out that the director's brother-in-law is a good *compañero* who is recognised as such by the workers there, but it comes to the same thing.

We went there to exchange a few opinions with the members of the nucleus and out came the head of personnel, in a work centre like that one, which is filled with workers dressed in sweat shirts and overalls smeared with grease, a head of personnel wearing a "cute" shirt with loud colours and a pair of white pants. And he was a member of the nucleus! What the blazes! They were completely separated from the masses.

What happened? The following happened: they took out the old militants and made them part of the administration — head of personnel, director. Later, when they formed the nucleus — since they once again made use of the old militants — they made that Commission of Directors a part of the nucleus. The members of the nucleus were old militants and all were directors. There was no one from the masses in the nucleus. It was an administration nucleus.

These examples illustrate the errors we have committed. Well, what was happening as a result of these things? The Ministry of Industry rewards 60 to 100 workers every month; of the present 60, only five were members of revolutionary nuclei. The average runs from five to ten members of the revolutionary nuclei. Five to 10% out of every 100 workers. Is this not so, more or less? From five to ten out of every 100 prize-winning workers. We had fallen, then, into all those errors. Those are the things which we, all of us, the old as well as the new, joined together in a common purpose, must rectify

We said, "Well, we have to rectify that situation. That is not the proper way to maintain contact with the masses." Why then, despite this situation, were we able to mobilise so many people so often? We were deceiving ourselves. It was not through that shell of an organisation that we were able to accomplish that. It was through the means at the disposal of the revolution for mobilising the masses: through the radio, television, the press — through all of those means. When we discussed all those matters with *compañero* Cesar, he expressed the opinion that there existed through those media a tremendous power for the mobilisation of the people, a direct means for the

mobilisation of the masses. That shell of a party did not mobilise the masses.

We would be in some fix if we had to depend on that mere shell of a party during an enemy attack. It was a mere shell of a party. There were very good *compañeros* in it. I am not going to go into — later on I am going to speak about the old communists, about all those things; of how we have to view this objectively, calmly, honestly, fairly, justly.

ORI could not mobilise the masses

But of course, that was not an apparatus for the mobilisation of the masses. There really existed a great power for mobilisation through the Commission of Revolutionary Orientation, a great power existed basically, through those means which the revolution has for mobilising the masses. But no proper means for maintaining contact with the masses existed and that responsibility belonged to a vanguard workers' party.

Then we simply have to integrate the masses. We had organised a few ORI, Integrated Revolutionary Organisations, and the masses, who are revolutionary masses, and who are the ones who make history, were not integrated, because there were no members who were from the masses, no one, no one from the masses. That is how the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations were formed.

I am sure that any communist, any citizen, old or new, anyone who thinks, agrees that this is an error. Not what we are doing today. Today we are not arguing about communism and anti-communism, nor about what ideological road to take. The revolution is irrevocably defined as Marxist-Leninist and we are making this self-criticism of our errors within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. Let no one suffer from any fantasies or engage in any illusions on this score. Do not imagine that we are going to take a single step backwards. No, on the contrary, we are going to move forward! (OVATION)

I was going to say just at the moment that you interrupted me that we are going to advance greatly. We are going to take long strides forward and and we are going to do so precisely by rectifying our errors.

We are discussing here — we are engaged in self-criticism as Marxists, *compañeros*, as Marxists-Leninists. Let the enemy say what he likes; it is not to the enemy's advantage that we hold this discussion; it is not to the enemy's advantage that we make this correction. This correction is only salutary and it will benefit the revolution.

That is, that we had made all these errors. We have to be a workers' vanguard party. We have to govern in the name of the working class, and we are making the aims of the revolution come true, and we are governing this country in the name of the working class, of the labouring class.

Our party has to be organised using Marxist methods, not by the methods of Louis XIV. Again I repeat a little expression which I have used at some meetings. These are the methods of Louis XIV: “Presto, I am the party. Presto, I begin to name the members of the party.”

No, that is not democratic centralism nor anything like it. Democratic centralism is a very different thing. It is a leadership which organises a party using Marxist-Leninist methods of selection, of work. What does it look for? It tries to gather within that party the best of the people, the best of the working class. The best workers in the country should be members of that party. Who are they? They are the model workers, the model labourers, who are in abundant supply.

In other words, the first requirement for belonging to the nucleus is to be a model worker. One cannot be a builder of socialism, nor a builder of communism, if one is not an outstanding worker. No vagrant, no idler, has any right to be a member of a revolutionary nucleus.

Very well now, that is not enough. Our experience during the course of this meeting has provided us with many interesting examples. He has to be an exemplary worker, but in addition he must accept the socialist revolution; he must accept the ideology of the revolution; he must want, of course, to belong to that revolutionary nucleus; he must accept the responsibilities which go with membership in the revolutionary nucleus. But, in addition, it is necessary to have led a clean life, that is to say, that one must never have served the tyranny as a soldier, as a policeman. Of course, there were people who had been members of the army who had been imprisoned for a long time; these cases are different.

There are special cases, of course, which are not like that of Garrucho. Garrucho was a councilman up to the very end, and I believe that he is a hero because only a hero could pretend to be a Batistiano for so long. If he was not really one, he deserves a medal.

But, well, what I want to say is the following: to have led a clean life; not to have any record as a Mujalista supporter of Eusebio Mujal, head of the union confederation under Prio Socarras and Batista, as a Batistiano; not to have been active in the PAU, in the PUR; not to have belonged to the armed forces of the tyranny, to the SIM [Servicio de Inteligencia Militar — Batista’s secret political police] or to any of those groups. That worker’s life must be free from that type of stigma.

This is interesting because recently, in a meeting, in — I believe that it was the Aspuru hardware store — in that meeting the workers were choosing the model workers, because the masses are perceptive, they have a sense of justice which in every meeting at which we have been present, and in all other meetings, manifests itself in

the choosing of some old militant from among the masses, because he stands out as a great communist, as an excellent worker.

The masses have a great sense of justice. Sometimes someone who has a bad record is chosen and the masses immediately bring this out. There have been cases where people who have bad records have been proclaimed as model workers. In some cases they have unfortunate records. Unfortunately such things happen. But in the meeting to which I am referring it so happened that the masses named an individual as a model worker. A worker got up from the multitude and said, "This man was a Mujalista." Then the man defended himself by saying that he had not been a Mujalista, and he confessed to having been a follower of Batista.

And in spite of this the masses said that he should belong to the nucleus. Such a mass of workers is confused and should be oriented. This means that it should be explained to them that such a man cannot belong to the nucleus for whoever says that he was a follower of Batista is saying that he agreed with all the crimes, with all the murders, all the tortures which Ventura, Carratala and all those criminals committed. This has to be argued with the masses. That is the duty of the party organisers and they must say "No!"

Nucleus have the complete support of the masses

Because, after all, the masses are not going to elect the nucleus; the party is not an elected party. It is a "selection" which is organised through the principle of democratic centralism. Now, the opinion of the masses must be taken into consideration. It is of the utmost importance that those who belong to that revolutionary nucleus have the complete support of the masses, that they enjoy great prestige with the masses.

We have been witnesses to truly moving cases. We have arrived at a meeting and asked for a list of 15 *compañeros*. We have asked that the masses point out those whom they consider to be model workers. They have stood up there and proposed certain names. And there are many methods for inventing tricks, hoaxes, fixed meetings, but the methods used by a resourceful parliamentarian make all that impossible.

When we asked them, "Do you believe that there remains the name of someone here who, because of his merits, it would be a pity to leave off the list?" They proposed a worker, a young *compañero*, a Negro. I believe that his name was Juan Antonio Betancourt. They pointed him out.

That extremely modest worker got up. He is quiet, shy. He got up on a stool and they began to ask, "Why do you think, *compañeros*, that this man is a model worker?" And they began to explain, and a worker with the look of honesty about him said: "Look, I was a dissatisfied worker. I was unhappy with the revolution. I was transferred

to this work centre. *Compañero* Juan Antonio approached me, he spoke to me many times. He explained things to me over and over again. He did so much; he acted so well; he was such a good *compañero*; we saw this *compañero* work always with such determination; we saw him do so many things — this *compañero* came to work even when he was ill — that this *compañero* succeeded in convincing me, in persuading me. Today I am a worker who understands the revolution, a worker who supports and defends the revolution.”

Another worker got up and said: “I would like to add to that. I was a worker who used to be absent quite often. I used to work on the outside because I earned more money. I used to earn two or three pesos more by working on the outside. Juan Antonio approached me; he spoke to me everyday; he explained to me that I was hurting the revolution; that mine was not an honest attitude; that I was harming the work centre; that I was harming the working class; that I was harming my homeland. And then I was never absent again from my work centre; I was never again an absentee worker.”

Another one got up and said: “Juan Antonio suffers from a gum condition. He has such and such a problem and sometimes his face has been swollen for two weeks and he has never been absent from work.”

Another worker stood up and said: “This *compañero* was once a painter. Later he began working in one of the offices. One day we arrived here with 15 cars which had to be painted. It was urgent that those cars be painted and this *compañero* said, ‘Don’t worry, just wait until I finish my work.’ When he finished his office work he spent long hours until he had completed the painting of all the cars. And this *compañero* will just as readily work 15 or 20 hours.”

While the masses were explaining those virtues, the qualities of that worker, one could not help but be impressed by all that was said, by all that recognition.

Then I asked a worker, “What do you think of this worker? Do you think that he is a better worker than you?”

And he said, “He’s ten times better than I” — he was a young man. “And do you hope to be like him? Do you think that you will be like him some day?”

And he said, “Perhaps I will. Perhaps if I improve myself, if I work, perhaps some day I will get to be as good a worker as he.”

These are the men whom we have to recruit! If that worker has a clean record, if he was not a Batistiano, if he was not a Mujalista, if he does not have a bad record, we must win that man over to our side, we must send him to school, we must teach him Marxism-Leninism, for such men possess the most excellent, the most valuable raw material for the making of a builder of socialism, of a builder of communism.

How are we going to build socialism and communism which means work, which

means the giving of oneself over completely to the work of society, without the men who are willing to work all the hours necessary, to make the necessary efforts, who go to work even when they are ill, who are never absent, without that type of worker of which the masses can give us many examples? That type of worker who is a militiaman, who is never absent when sugar cane has to be cut, who never misses guard duty, who is the kind of *compañero* who encourages others, who is recognised by the masses as a worker-hero, as a model citizen. We have to recruit such men as these. We must recruit all the revolutionists, old and new.

How could we keep the masses out? How could we divorce ourselves from the masses? There are many model workers among the old revolutionists who are recognised as such by the masses. There are others who are not model workers. There is no reason why there should be disagreement with this because being a communist does not endow one with a hereditary title nor with a title of nobility. To be a communist means that one has a certain attitude towards life and that attitude has to be the same from the first day until the moment of death. When that attitude is abandoned, even though one has been a communist, it ceases to be a communist attitude towards life, towards the revolution, towards one's class, towards the people. If this is so, let us then not convert that into a hereditary title!

We have fallen into that error. We have fallen into a problem of castes, not into one of classes, *compañeros*, Let us not give up the principle of class in order to fall into the problem of castes, into that of titles of nobility, into that of privileges, into that of sectarianism, *compañeros*. Every good Marxist, every good communist must understand this.

What spirit moves us to make these criticisms? Do we do this to bring about a change of opinion, to create an unfavorable opinion in regard to the old communist militants? No, *compañeros*, never. On the contrary, we do not want to expose so many good communists to the blame and to the scorn to which bad methods, methods which are not communist methods, to which a sectarianism which is neither Marxist nor Leninist, will expose them. Because such methods bring discredit and tend to spread. And they tend to make the masses regard all communists as they do that bad one, and not as they do the good ones, as they do so many Marxist militants.

We make this criticism, this self-criticism of criticisms, in which we are all to blame for the way in which these events have developed, simply to overcome these errors so that the revolution may free itself from these errors, so that we may proceed to the formation of a true vanguard party, a true Marxist-Leninist organisation, which will march at the head of the working class.

Let us not confuse the functions of that organisation with the administrative

functions of the state apparatus. It so happened that we had established a principle of interference on all levels which was destroying the apparatus of the socialist state. And the socialist state has to function with great efficiency. How could we destroy that apparatus? How could we create such confusion? We must come out of that confusion.

What must our attitude be towards the old communists? It should be one of respect, one which recognises their merits and which recognises their militancy. That should be our attitude. What should his attitude be? His attitude should be one of modesty. What should be the attitude of a revolutionist, of one who fought? His should be an attitude of modesty. Of one who fought in the Sierra, in the underground? They should be modest, they should have revolutionary modesty. We must put an end to the boasting of those who say, "I did this, I did that during the insurrection."

We brought this out in the month of December and we must oppose all those who come around boasting about their deeds, no matter where they may be. Why? I dealt harshly with a *compañero* here and I said that he was hiding under the bed. Why do I judge this *compañero* so? Because I believe that a man who acts in that fashion cannot be a good revolutionist, he is instead a complete opportunist. Does this mean that we could consider anyone who did not fight to have been "under the bed"? No! Let us not be confused about this! I say that the opportunist, yes, that the opportunist, was under the bed. You cannot fail to call him otherwise, because a person who acts in that fashion is one who was hiding, full of ambition, corrupted.

That is not what we are saying here. We continue to insist that what one did not do in the past should not form the basis for the exclusion of anyone. This may serve as a reference of a sort; it may have some use. But, gentlemen, what is the revolution? The revolution is superior to what each of us may have done. It is superior and it is more important than each of the organizations that were here: the 26th of July Movement, the Partido Socialista Popular, the Directorio — than all of them. The revolution by itself is much more important than all that.

What is the revolution? It is a great trunk which has its roots. Those roots, coming from different directions, were united in the trunk. The trunk begins to grow. The roots are important, but what begins to grow is the trunk of a great tree, of a very tall tree, whose roots came together and were joined in the trunk. All of us together made the trunk. The growing of the trunk is all that remains for us to foster and together we will continue to make it grow.

The day will come, *compañeros* — think well upon this, because this is basic, think well upon this—when what we have done in the past will be less important, when what each of us has done on his own account will be less important than what we have done together. Let us take this idea with us. Within ten years, within 20 years, we will have

the common history of having done this together, and then no one will be talking about what each one did on his own — in the Partido Socialista Popular, in the 26th, in the Directorio, in the other group. Then those things will be like the roots which come from afar, which now remain in the distance. The important thing is what we are already doing as a trunk, in which we are all united. And we have said this.

What have we done together? We have done many things together. Can the importance of the fight against imperialism be ignored? Can the fight against the enemy at Playa Giron [the Bay of Pigs], which was a crucible uniting all of us there, the day following the proclamation of the socialist revolution, all together, old and new communists, citizens who were neither old nor new to these things, people from the masses, anonymous heroes, can all this be ignored? Look at the photographs of those who died. More than 100 men who fell gave their lives for this. The greatness of the hour united them. Their sacrifice united them.

Important thing is what we are doing together

What matters is not what each of us has done separately, *compañeros*, the important thing is what we are going to do together, what we have been doing together for a long time now. And what we are doing together is of interest to all of us equally, *compañeros*. Who will be so stupid as not to care about what all of us are doing together, about how it benefits us or about how it hurts him? Who can be so idiotic as not to be able to understand these things? It is a tangible reality. We have to correct these things. What does this mean? Does it mean that the opportunist is going to sneak in now? No! Listen, *compañeros*, we have to dig a double line of trenches across the path of the opportunists, so that the opportunists may not sneak in. There is no opening here. Is the faker, is the sower of intrigues going to sneak in through some opening? There is no opening here. There must be a greater unity here between the old and the new!

Briefly, we must apply Marxist-Leninist principles to our work; we must follow a policy based on correct methods and a policy based on principles. A policy based on methods and on principles is the only correct policy which offers guarantees to all; all will feel secure with such a policy. That sectarian policy threatened to sweep all before it. No one felt secure any longer because of that sectarianism. Many *compañeros* saw evidences of sectarianism everywhere. No one felt secure. Why? Because it was a policy that was not based on principles; because it was a policy that was not based on correct methods. A policy based on principles, a policy based on correct methods offers guarantees and security to all revolutionists.

It is not a policy which is based on the acceptance of my or another's friends. It is not a policy based on personal friendships. It is not a policy based on unconditional

followers. It is not a policy based on tamed or submissive people. No! A Marxist-Leninist party, which is the vanguard of the working class, is an association of free revolutionists, wherein all the revolutionists follow a policy based on methods and principles; a policy which offers equal guarantees to all, to whoever works, to whoever fulfills his responsibilities. A policy which offers guarantees to all against injustice, against abuse of power, against discrimination, against mistreatment, against all these things, so that all may feel that they are equally guaranteed, the new as well as the old.

Does this mean that when we undertake the correction of these things that we are going to remove and to dismiss people left and right? No, *compañeros*, nothing like that. As many old militants may belong as long as the revolution considers it necessary for them to be there. But they must be placed there only as the result of the policy of the whole revolution, not because it is the policy of a political tendency, not because of a policy of a personal nature!

No, sir! No, sir! We must simply correct this in the manner in which it should be corrected, by benefiting from that correction; by emerging more united, stronger; by seeing who is good and who is no good and by allowing the quality, the quality of the work done to have the final word.

Now then, how must we act towards an old or new Marxist? We must be much tougher towards them than towards others. With whom must we be more exacting? With the member of the organisation! How can we be less demanding with the member of the organisation than with one who is not? No! No! The Marxist, the member of the organisation, who makes a mistake is doubly to blame. One must be unyielding towards that error; one must demand that he assume his responsibilities so that the people may see that to be a member of the organisation does not entitle one to privileges, to pleasures, to advantages, to the right to meddle, or to favors of any sort. No! Let everyone be aware that to belong to that organisation may be a great honour, but that it also means sacrifice, more sacrifice, more work than others have to do, more self - sacrifice, than others have to make, that it means fewer privileges than others may have. That is what the organization must do so that the good ones, so that the best will belong to it, so that those who are no good will not belong to it, so that no demoralising person, so that no opportunist will infiltrate it. How is the opportunist going to join such an organisation! The opportunist goes where there are some advantages to be gained, where there is privilege. But when there is work to be done, where there is great effort to be made — there the opportunist will not go. The opportunist will go home.

This does not mean that they are to come in *en masse*. No! The organisation has to be a selection of the very best in every respect. That is the kind of organisation that we

have to make. In regard to the old *compañeros* we should show respect, we should give them the best of treatment, we should have confidence in them. Do not forget that a sectarian individual may be a great *compañero* who has been infected with the virus of sectarianism, who may have been dragged along by a sectarian policy injected by persons in certain positions.

And I am going to cite an example. At the University a grave act of sectarianism, of dogmatism was committed when three lines of *compañero* Echeverría's political testament were suppressed. We protested bitterly. Who was responsible? Well, a good *compañero*. The *compañero* who had been — responsible for that is without a doubt a good *compañero*. He is *compañero* Ravelo. And yet, why did he make that error? This demonstrates that it is the result of the influence of a line, of a personal line, of a line, of an injected policy, of a wrong attitude which has become quite widespread. That *compañero* is a good *compañero*. He called the whole university together, he subjected himself to a serious, honest self-criticism and he came out with more prestige at the university than possibly he had before he was criticised. Why! Because he had an honest attitude. The masses recognised that. And he is a good *compañero*.

The point is that a person who has committed an act of this kind is not a traitor to the revolution; he is not an enemy of the revolution. He was harming the revolution without knowing it. I am convinced that the great majority of cases were unconscious ones resulting from a policy injected by a *compañero* who had a determined policy and who is really responsible, who is very responsible for that policy because he was indulgent, he was complaisant, he practiced that policy which led to a very widespread sectarian attitude.

Then, what must our attitude be? Ours should not be a policy of reserve towards the old militant but rather one of confidence towards the old militant. And I am going to cite an example. In my bodyguard there are many old militants and I do not plan to remove any old militant from my bodyguard because I have full confidence in those *compañeros*. By this I want to show what an attitude of real confidence has to be, that is to say, that we should not now fall into the opposite form of sectarianism. We cannot fall into that! Because if we are going to rectify errors we cannot fall into other errors, and we have to be very alert, very vigilant and you may rest assured that we will fight any manifestation of sectarianism of any kind with all our energies! We will fight it with all our energies and by every means! Already we are going to fight through radio, through television, through the newspapers; we are going to accuse anyone who we think has committed an act of sectarianism, injustice, discrimination, reserve, distrust of any kind towards any *compañero*, no matter who may be responsible. That will be our attitude.

I believe that it is the only honest attitude, the attitude which we should follow, the one which will offer guarantees to all the *compañeros*, the one which will allow us to overcome these errors, the one which will allow the revolution to come out stronger, *compañeros*, to come out enhanced from this criticism.

It does not matter what our enemies may say. It does not matter that they may want to take advantage of this tomorrow. That does not matter. They know that they are losing from this very moment in which we are beginning to correct serious errors, that the masses comprehend this, that they understand this, because the masses are just. They will be impotent before an organisation, before a people, before a revolutionary government which is honest enough to analyse, to recognise the errors which have been made during the revolution, which has the courage to rectify them equitably, and calmly, with a spirit of justice.

Differences between old and new must cease

We have been harsh today. We felt that it was necessary to be so, that it was healthy to be so. Because, *compañeros*, we feel that from this moment on, *compañeros*, all differences between the old and the new, between those who fought in the Sierra and those who were down in the lowlands, between those who took up arms and those who did not, between those who studied Marxism and those who did not study Marxism before, we feel that all differences between them should cease. That from this moment on we have to be one thing alone. And rather than be like that woman who they say kept looking — who the Bible says — kept looking towards that lake, towards that city which had sunk, and who was changed into a pillar of salt.

We cannot be changed into a pillar of salt, looking back at what we have done, contemplating, enjoying what we have done. We must look forward, *compañeros!* That is the only proper attitude for us to have, which all honest men should have, which all honest revolutionist, old and new, should have without reservations of any kind, without regrets of any kind, without mistrust of any kind. All of us, embracing our cause, our revolution, the historic mission of this revolution, embracing Marxism-Leninism, which is the ideology of the working class, which is a science. Embracing Marxism-Leninism which possesses all the attractions which a true revolutionary theory, a true revolutionary science, possesses. It is extremely rich and from it we can extract extraordinary lessons; in it we have an extraordinary instrument for struggle, an incomparable cause, the best cause for which to fight, the best cause for which to die, a cause which can be identified only with the spirit which is most profoundly human, most profoundly just, most profoundly generous, most profoundly good.

The enemy tries to present Marxism as something bad, as something unjust. No!

Never allow them to confuse the masses by using the errors of those who act badly, of those who are wrong!

Our people today have the good fortune of being able to rely on a triumphant revolution with its power based on the masses. It has the good fortune of being able to rely on a revolutionary ideology, irresistible, invincible, a thousand times superior, infinitely superior, to the ideology of the reactionaries, of the exploiters; an ideology enriched by a century of struggles, enriched with the blood of workers, with proletarian blood, with the blood of heroes spilled in the defence of justice's cause, in defence of the cause of the equality of man, in defence of the brotherhood of man!

That is our cause. That is our standard! That is why we should feel proud, proud of being Marxist-Leninists, proud of being honest, proud, *compañeros*, of having the public spirit and the honesty to discuss here — publicly — our errors, to discuss them as we have discussed them, together, proud of solving them, as we have solved them, together; proud of appearing, as we are appearing here before the masses in order to explain to them, to explain to them in general terms, the basic measures taken — the dismissal of the *compañero* whom we consider responsible for these deeds, measures concerning the Directorate and the offices of the Secretary in Charge of Organisation; the measures we have taken, the increase in the members of that National Directorate so that there may be included in it all the historic names, all the *compañeros* who, because of their merits, in one way or another, are worthy of belonging to that National Directorate!

If we do the same on all levels it will strengthen us, it will make our revolution more powerful. It will make the people's faith in the revolutionary leadership firmer. It will make the faith of all the revolutionists of the world in us greater. It will make the faith of all the revolutionary organisations of Latin America in the Cuban Revolution greater. Why? Because the fact that we know how to make corrections will give the Cuban Revolution prestige. It will give the Cuban Revolution all the strength which organisations have when they know how to purify themselves of evils, when they know how to correct their errors, when they know how to overcome their difficulties!

Rest assured, *compañeros*, that by doing this our revolution will be invincible. Rest assured, *compañeros*, that by doing this there will be no force in the world which will be able to defeat our revolution, and I repeat here what I said once when we arrived at the capital of the republic: "We have overcome our own obstacles. No enemies but ourselves, but our own errors, remain. Only our own errors will be able to destroy this revolution!" I repeat it today, but I add that there will be no error which we will not oppose and that therefore there will be no error which will be able to destroy the revolution! There will be no errors which will not be overcome, and that is why our revolution will be invincible. ■

4. The Labour Movement Must Be Democratic

Speech given on September 3, 1970 at the closing session of a meeting of the Havana province Central Organisation of Cuban Trade Unions (CTC). One of the measures debated was a proposed “anti-loafing law”, a largely educational measure aimed at backward workers who received all the social benefits of the new state but who didn’t work or were often absent from work. The text is taken from *Granma Weekly Review*, September 20, 1970.



Well, comrades if you like, I’ll say a few words. (APPLAUSE)

Comrade [Jorge] Risquet has done a brilliant summing up, giving a rundown of the essential points discussed and of the aims pursued by this meeting.

Throughout the discussions, I have been expressing a few ideas and thoughts, too.

As I was saying a moment ago, with this meeting, we have begun to wage a battle. In order to advance, we have to wage not one but at least a dozen battles, and perhaps even more battles will present themselves along the way. One of the most urgent battles, one that should be given priority, is this one against absenteeism, and it should be followed up by another to prevent any misunderstandings in connection with what Comrade Risquet and I have said here with regard to voluntary work.

Undoubtedly, there has not been an adequate reaction in the face of the difficult situation we are facing — which we described clearly. If, in a critical situation on a battlefield, an army doesn’t react by counter-attacking and fighting all the harder, then the battle is lost.

Of course, all this took place in the midst of a vacation period following long months of work. This was in July, and we had the carnival, fiestas, and other things like that. Really, it’s perfectly logical that we should find this type of phenomenon in August, isn’t it? Moreover, we ourselves had said that the workers’ vacations should

come first and that later we would have to really dig in in earnest. But it could, nevertheless, be said that a reaction worthy of our difficulties and the obstacles we have before us was lacking. There is no doubt about that.

Isn't it true that during these days — due to a combination of circumstances and to the fact that we are none too sure about how we are going to solve these problems— there has been a rise in absenteeism? This is true. Even without the holding of this meeting, absenteeism would go down automatically in September. This is to be expected. It will happen when all the workers who have been on vacation go back to work, when many members of the Lenin Column are back at work and when the people have finally grown tired of abusing absenteeism — if we may put it this way. Therefore, it is to be expected in September.

However, that is not enough. Even winning the battle against absenteeism is not enough. That is only a part of the problem. But, even so, we believe that it is of major importance, since it has to do with the manner in which the workers react in the face of difficulties.

Now then, we are faced with an endless number of problems. Of the problems we are faced with ... that is, we have objective problems of every type — as we said at the meeting of the Federation of Cuban Women. But the trouble is that those problems become more and more serious to the extent that we are incapable of doing what is required in such a situation. Moreover, we are now faced with many problems of a subjective nature. And these adversely affect production, as well as the workers' attitude toward work and many other things, some of which have already been pointed out here.

We've only mentioned a part of our problems here, and I'm sure dozens — if not hundreds — of comrades still have a lot of things to get off their chests with regard to the different kinds of difficulties encountered in their work centres and everywhere else, but, even so, we feel this subject has been covered quite thoroughly here, with a whole series of things being brought to light which reveal the size of the struggle we will have to engage in if we are to overcome all these difficulties.

The objective conditions in which the trade union leaders and party cadres must work are difficult. If the administrator is lazy, if a man is in-competent, if you are faced with a series of real difficulties — for example, such as those we saw today when we visited the plant whose roof, according to what a comrade said yesterday, has a lot of leaks and is about to fall in.

We made it a point to visit some of the places mentioned in yesterday's meeting. The comrade had stated that men had been there several times and had taken measurements but that nothing more was ever done in four or five years. I asked

Comrade [Juan] Almeida to visit the place with me to see if we could find an immediate solution to the problem there. It just so happened it rained while we were on our way to the plant, and after we arrived there it began to rain harder. As a matter of fact, anybody would think that a description of what actually happens there when it rains hard is a little exaggerated. It's really incredible how much water comes pouring in during a cloudburst! It makes you really appreciate the battle that must be waged by a trade union representative or a party cadre at a plant where such things as that have been going on for five years. This plant where so many people work has no workers' dining room — or, rather, it has a dining room, but the food is so bad nobody eats there. And the cafeteria is pretty badly stocked, as well.

It is a fact that even the finished goods get wet there. You can see the finished printed matter getting wet, the things we have acquired with foreign exchange being ruined. The machinery isn't helped any by the moisture, either, and there's a danger of accidents being caused by shortcircuits in the electrical wiring and things like that.

Then what? This has been going on for five years. It makes you wonder how anyone can speak about saving, economising on foreign exchange, and making an effort to attain development and promote the economy to 400 workers at a plant where nothing has been done about a leaky roof and merchandise is being ruined as a result.

Undoubtedly, such a situation makes the work of the party and the trade union very difficult indeed.

Obviously, the inverse of this would be for everything to work perfectly — and we would really be supreme idealists if we expected such a thing to happen! It has been a very difficult thing. As a matter of fact, the change that has taken place in the life of the country has been so deep that, in a sense, we are receiving not only the positive but also the negative fruits of the revolution.

Work today is voluntary

This is because the revolution, first of all, creates a tremendous disorder in the whole life of a country, a tremendous change in the mode of production. As a matter of fact, we have gone from virtually a slave mode of production to a free mode of production. That is the essence of the problem. This slavery was not one in which men wore chains on their ankles but rather a subtle — but no less effective — form in which men who had no personal or social wealth either worked or starved, along with their families. Men were forced, under pain of death, to work with punctuality and discipline. The army of the unemployed stood at half a million, and men vied with each other to work at a factory and were proud of obtaining employment at a plant such as the rayon

factory in Matanzas, where they were practically poisoned.

And what is the picture today? The conditions created by the revolution have done away with those ominous circumstances. It may be said that work today is voluntary — and I don't mean just the work we do on Sundays when we go and pitch in in agriculture. Under present conditions, work has become practically a voluntary affair for all the citizens in this country.

First of all, this is determined by the fact that many vital problems have been solved. The things the baker brought up: the housing problem has been solved for many; medicines, education, social security - the possibility of everyone's having a secure life. There are no beggars, prostitutes, destitute people, or abandoned orphans in this country. The present generation of young people has not even known the scourge of unemployment. On the other hand, there is a surplus of money over and above the supply of goods to be purchased, making the value of money — the means through which work is remunerated and goods are bought — relative. The goods and services we have available can be bought up to certain limits.

Doubtless, if we had many more goods and services available, these factors would not enter into a situation in which many families have more money than they know what to do with. However, this is not a universal thing, as there are still some cases of workers whose wages are barely enough to support their families.

But there is no doubt that the circumstances in which they are drawn to work are basically factors of a moral order, factors having to do with awareness, a healthy outlook. and a sense of the social and human importance of their work

Thus, in these circumstances, there has been a tremendous change in work conditions. That is, some people without morals and without a sense of their social duty today take the liberty to scorn their work, remain idle, let the weight of the productive effort fall on the shoulders of others, cheat, and do a million and one other things.

There has been, I repeat, a tremendous change in the mode and relations of production and distribution of social wealth. Moreover — as I said yesterday — with the means of production becoming collective property, the employment of these means of production and human resources in the production and distribution of goods and services creates an administrative problem on a grand scale. I was saying that even the human brain cannot retain many things. No human brain, no group of accountants, can keep track of our stock of merchandise today. Just so, a trip to the moon today would be impossible without computers, because the number of calculations required and the speed at which complex problems must be solved would make this task impossible for the human brain. Neither is it possible, without computers,

to keep track of the economy, of inventories, of what is in stock and of what is needed on the tremendous scale demanded by a socialist economy. Even the imperialists, the developed capitalists, had to develop computers, without which they would have been unable to handle their businesses. General Motors would be out of business today were it not for computers. Moreover, if it weren't for computers, that huge Yankee airliner somebody came in on only recently — whose construction calls for millions of parts, parts which must flow smoothly and simultaneously to converge at the factory where thousands of engineers and technicians take part in the mass production of these planes — would not exist.

In comparison with all this, our work is but primitive. We work on an enormous scale, because our problems are the problems of millions and our goods are for millions, but our methods of administration and leadership are still primitive.

Administration imbued with a petty-bourgeois spirit

Administration on a large scale is a science. And we certainly do not have these kinds of scientists. Therefore, the terrific amount of confusion, mistakes, and snafus that exist in this field are almost understandable. In addition, there are problems of an ideological, political nature. Public administration is still deeply imbued with a petty-bourgeois spirit. We have the problem that there are times when public officials do not look at all like the rest of the workers. It is true that many managers are of working-class origin and have proletarian habits and spirit, but there are others who resemble parachutists floating down from the sky above, absolutely insensitive and lazy, without an iota of proletarian spirit.

There is no doubt that this antiworker spirit, this scorn for the workers, exists among a number of administrators. Such things were re-vealed in this meeting.

There is also the fact that, as we explained yesterday, problems cannot be solved in a revolutionary society through administrative methods. This is very clear. Even the best administration cannot call forth the control, vigilance, militancy, and mass energy necessary to overcome problems.

We have to wage a battle in every work centre; service; and fundamental aspect of our political, economic, and social life, backed by the firm support of the masses — a real battle, in which this meeting is just a first step. The problem of absenteeism we've talked about here is just the first step. Absenteeism is the thing we must tackle with everything we've got right now. But there are other things, like peak organisational efficiency, optimal use of human and material resources, and the great battle for work productivity, which we must wage in the coming months and years, and without which we will never be able to solve our problems.

Along these lines, we haven't limited ourselves to public speeches, but have been analysing, meeting, and studying all problems, all causes; working, searching, and acting. We have to do more than spend time discussing and analysing things. A series of concrete measures must be adopted in all fields. We are trying to do this in agriculture, industry, and all other sectors.

We are now under tremendous pressure, having to analyse and mull over the measures that are to be adopted for the advance of the revolution in this stage of its existence and in future years, plus having to do all the concrete work that can't be put off.

These ideas I'm throwing out are a summary of the principal problems we face today. With the elimination of the inhuman factors which forced people to work, the alternative is the development of the greatest possible consciousness among the people and the application of pressure by working society on those who want to live like parasites off the work of others, refusing to fulfill their most elementary social and human duty.

Drawing up the kind of law the workers want against indolence — Comrade Risquet went into this a bit — won't be easy. The different sections will have to be modified and things will have to be added which are more in keeping with the present situation, our new experiences and ideas.

Perhaps the best method would be for a series of surveys to be carried out and the workers polled on their opinions before the law is drawn up in final form. That way, it could be drawn up with a full awareness of the workers' opinions and then be submitted for their consideration. We have to consider the international political aspect, as well, because we can't have people judging the Cuban working class by the bad attitude of a minority of 5 or 10% of the people.

I believe that the best thing about the law is that it will spring from the workers. Their opinions should be given wide coverage by the mass media, and they should speak on these problems over television and radio and have their opinions published in the newspapers, explaining their ideas on what to do with the lazy bums and absentees. This way the popular, nonadministrative nature of the law will be clear to all, and the law will express the will of the working people of Cuba. This is very important from the international point of view. Our enemies will surely say, "Look — under capitalism there aren't any laws against indolence. Of course, capitalism is inhuman, and its blind, ruthless, and criminal laws force people to work and make many of them spend years waiting to find a humble job. Under capitalism, millions of people are kept in ignorance so that they will perform the most brutal tasks, and there is an army of the unemployed held ready as a labour-power reserve.

In a rational and just society, the majority, in defence of its interests, has the right and duty to adopt measures to exert pressure on the tiny minority which refuses to fulfill its social duty after the hateful right of some men to exploit others has been done away with. The capitalists would never enact laws against indolence, because they themselves are the parasites in the society in which they live. The first great blow against indolence was struck when the revolution wiped out capitalism.

Now that we've abolished capitalism, who are the only exploiters that are left? Who are the ones who can exploit us today? Those who try to take privileges. Privileges can be a factor in exploiting the working people. We must always fight with everything we've got against any manifestation of privilege taking.

Leaders must be examples in work and sacrifice. This should be so all the way down the line. (APPLAUSE)

Take the problem of housing. Early in the revolution there were thousands of empty apartments and houses waiting for people to pay sky-high rent. At that time, the Urban Reform Law provided a remedy for that situation. Many families were then enabled to rent a house, and all of a sudden rent payments ceased to be a source of worry and an instrument of exploitation for millions of people. However, the situation is different today. The population has grown, and house building has not kept pace. There are tremendous tensions in this respect. In such a situation, the administrative official — or, even worse, the political leader — who gets preferential treatment in obtaining a house that becomes available, right before the eyes of thousands of people who don't have a single room and before the eyes of all the people, does a tremendous amount of damage to the authority and prestige of the revolution. Right away, the *gusanos*,* our enemies, the loafers and lumpen elements — all the enemies of work — seize on this as an argument to use against the revolution, trying to demoralise the revolutionaries.

Our vanguard has come from the working class

Fortunately, our vanguard has not become demoralised. Our vanguard is made up, basically, of people who have come from the working class. The vast majority of our party members have been selected in workers' assemblies. Those who hold administrative and leadership posts have been selected for party membership taking their revolutionary record and their conduct during the revolutionary process into account. If there are exceptions — if, unfortunately, as has happened, there are cases

* *Gusano* — Spanish for *worm*; Cuban term for counter-revolutionaries, especially those who left the country.

of privilege taking and even corruption — we have to eradicate them, but completely!

If a cadre or party member has gone sour, he must be replaced; he has to be taken out of the party without loss of time.

Then, that moral factor will not be difficult to obtain. The battle against every manifestation of privilege taking will not be difficult to win. Now then, the other battle is more difficult — the battle against that minority that doesn't have enough consciousness yet, that hasn't been educated properly, that is maladjusted in a society of workers — that battle will prove more difficult.

Those of that minority exploit the rest of us, because even though they don't work they do wear shoes and other clothing, eat food, take in movies and other entertainment, get medicines when they fall sick — and everything is done to save their lives — and receive a free funeral when they die. No doubt about it, they get everything. But every one of the goods and services they receive has to be produced by somebody.

That may be our exploiter today. We have to rebel against these manifestations of exploitation with the same vigor and hatred with which the workers rebelled against imperialist monopolies, the latifundists, bourgeois exploiters, and chiseling merchants, for they are a manifestation of wrongdoing in a collectivist society, and we must put a stop to them. I'm in complete agreement with Comrade Risquet's thesis that this is fundamentally a political matter; that the measures that are taken, besides emanating from the people, should be educational; that 90% of the battle should be won by simply discussing and approving the law; that the law be applied against a minority; that we should be well oriented as to how we apply it; and that we know how to distinguish between cases and avoid a mechanical application of the law.

Moreover, gentlemen, I believe that we should keep a file on every worker. Everybody knows everybody else in his work centre: those who are liars, those who are honest and good, and those who are dishonest. Everybody knows these things in every work centre.

We should do everything possible to avoid simplistic and mechanical solutions in this regard. More than ever, our work should be guided by political principles, taking intelligent measures and distinguishing among cases. Moreover, problems in one work centre may be different from those in another. The problems at some places are difficult to solve; there are many places where the workers can't be sure they'll even get a snack. There are workers who, in order to work eight hours, have to spend four commuting - and this under very difficult conditions. And, of course, there are all those administrative and objective factors we see in the factories.

I was saying, if a man sees that the roof in a factory is leaking and things have been

getting wet for such a long time, he must have a very deep conviction to believe in the revolution. It wouldn't be hard for him to conclude that this thing is no good, that there is no future for it if five years can go by and a leaky roof in a factory is not repaired. That is the situation there.

Of course, there are many positive things that give encouragement to the people, but these other factors promote discouragement, demoralisation, and things like that.

Then again, no two work centres have exactly the same situation. There are many, I repeat, that don't have a dining room, and some where the workers don't even get a snack. There are many places where conditions are much better than in others; we have seen such places. One of the things we have to look into is how we can improve the workers' dining rooms so that in the future every workers' dining room will be like a restaurant, a reasonably nice and pleasant place.

Unfortunately, we don't have all the resources we need, so this can't be accomplished easily.

There are some fields in which the country can make rapid progress. Our fishing fleet is growing, and our high potential for producing milk can and should be taken advantage of. Or breweries can boost the production of malt drinks for the workers' dining rooms. Today we have more resources than ever before for continuing to increase rice production and give a dramatic boost to the production of root and other vegetables. It will be much more difficult — in a short period of time — to increase the production of meat. This is because, notwithstanding the fact that our cattle herds have been upgraded for the production of milk, our pasturelands didn't receive all the attention they should have in the last few years, the birth rate wasn't high enough, and the number of head that had to be slaughtered — because of lack of weight — has been high.

We are now giving the greatest attention to this matter and to the boosting of production of hogs and poultry.

Therefore, relatively soon, we can increase the output of many — if not all — of our important foodstuffs.

We must do our best to try and achieve this, as we are faced with a need to increase the number of children that can be admitted to the daycare centres so their mothers may take jobs; we have to increase the number that can have their meals in the schools' dining rooms, for the same reason; and we have to increase the number that can eat and the quality of the meals in the workers' dining rooms, many of which do not yet have a quota whereby they may be assured of their food supply.

Therefore, we are going to follow a policy aimed at improving the workers' situation — first of all, with regard to food, and then in transportation. We are pushing through

a plan in Havana Province's genetics centres aimed at supplying milk to work centres where the work is difficult and protecting the workers' health calls for better nutrition. We have asked the Ministry of Labour to furnish us with a list of the work centres that should have priority for health reasons.

Of course, we can't go by this kind of priority alone. There may be places that, though not on such a priority list because of the type of work involved, have to be considered, since they have absolutely nothing else. If it is possible to furnish at least a snack — some soda crackers with deviled ham and a little milk — even though the work centre is not on a priority list on the basis of the kind of work done there, it is right to do so. There are work centres in which, because of the sanitary conditions there, work is not so hard as it is in others, but whereas the latter have something the former don't have anything.

Therefore, we have to try to distribute our products as fairly as possible. I believe that within a year or so we can provide 100,000 workers with an 11-ounce glass of milk a day — that is, if we succeed in finishing those dairies that've already been mentioned here, which the construction workers could finish more rapidly if there were less absenteeism. That is, if the construction brigades raise their productivity; if construction work proceeds at a good clip at the Nina Bonita, Nazareno, Flor de Itabo, Picadura, Nina Sierra, and other dairies. We have the cows, and the equipment for mechanical milking is coming in. Similar projects can be organised in each of the rest of the nation's provinces, since all of them have a large number of dairy heifers with which it would be possible not only to supply milk to the workers' dining rooms but also to increase the amount of milk supplied to the nation's children and the people in general and, moreover, reduce the amount of milk products we are now importing. The problem lies in building the milking facilities and getting them into operation.

There's another formula we are studying. Perhaps the Artemisa Banana Project could arrange for the distribution of bananas to workers' dining rooms. The same thing goes for the Albert Kuntz cracker plant. We could thus continue working out ways to improve the workers' snacks and meals.

We've also decided to organise a few brigades to build dining rooms in places where there aren't any as yet. We could use the dining room at Construimport, or something similar, as our model.

Here, for example, a worker handed me a note which reads as follows: "Comrade Fidel, Unit 209 (previously known as Edimira) in San Jose de las Lajas invites you and the comrade from the Lincoln Sugar Mill who reported on the difficulties encountered by the dining room there to visit ours, which we made ourselves — even the building blocks — with voluntary work." This proves that things can be accomplished.

We're going to see just how many compressors, how much cork, and how many other raw materials we need to build the refrigerators and cold-storage rooms required. We have to determine what the design should be for 250, 500, 750, and 1000 workers. Within the next few days we should have all that information, and we'll try to get all the necessary materials together.

Another problem we're working on is that of transportation for the factories. Some means of transportation have already been assigned to several of them, and we began with Santiago de Cuba. Why? To help those with the biggest problems, complementing the rest of the urban transportation during the night shifts.

We have a plan ... the problem is that the 300 medium-sized buses we're building this year are just a drop in the bucket compared to our needs, since, in addition to the great needs posed by rural transportation, we now also have those of the factories. What are we going to do with those buses? We'll turn them into "collective cars" for the workers. They will pick up the workers following a planned route. Those workers who can do so without much trouble will use the regular buses. The factory buses will be for the exclusive use of those workers who have the greatest difficulties in using the regular transportation service. The factory buses can also be used for the workers' vacation trips in the summer, during the hours when they are not being used for taking the workers to and from work. We can coordinate the vacation plans with that in mind.

Some things can be distributed at the plants

We also believe, gentlemen, that some things can be distributed at the plants themselves. How should we distribute those refrigerators that are being manufactured in Santa Clara? Some of them will be installed in the apartments we are building for the farmers in the agricultural projects. We're already doing this in every new town. But we will have approximately 15,000 to distribute in 1971. How should we do this? I think we should sell them at the plants, by means of quotas assigned proportionally to work centres, with the workers who are to receive them presenting a card they have received at their work centres when they call at the distribution unit. How can we sell almost half a million pressure cookers? Well, I think we should do this by means of cards assigned at the work centres, too. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

Then, what will we do? As far as the absentees go, they know they haven't got a chance of getting a refrigerator. Everybody knows they'll never be able to get one, no matter what. (APPLAUSE)

And, in the same way, when we have enough furniture and other permanent effects produced, we'll distribute them at the factories, too.

The formula somebody suggested with regard to cigarettes resembles this somewhat, but we should go into this question of cigarettes further. That's another matter we'll have to discuss: what to do about cigarettes. I asked the comrades to dig up all the data available on the thousands, the hundreds of thousands of people we would have to use to maintain both the export and the domestic supply, considering the increase in demand.

Therefore, with regard to cigarettes and liquor, we'll have to find a solution on the basis of price fixing. There are some people who don't smoke, but they latch onto a pack of cigarettes and turn right around and trade it to somebody else — sometimes, gentlemen, they even trade it for food! It would be better if the workers would continue paying little for their food and pay a little more for cigarettes. Even the boys are getting into the habit of smoking, because they can get a pack of cigarettes for 20 cents. It's better to invest our energies in supplying the workers' dining rooms with malt drinks, milk, and other foodstuffs than to spend any more energy on an item which has been proved to be extremely harmful.

In short, we believe that, for certain items, such as cigarettes and liquor, we should look for a solution in the realm of price fixing rather than rationing.

When I spoke on July 26, I said that we didn't like a solution based on prices. Why? Ah, because with the existing inequality in wages only some people would be able to buy meat, milk, etc. at high prices. All the people need all the vital products. That is not the case with cigarettes, since the first problem we come across is who smokes and who doesn't, who should be given a quota and who shouldn't. If we ration them, everybody would demand his quota. If we distribute them through the factories, all we would accomplish would be to have the workers smoking more, and we'd be protecting the health of the loafers. We must make use of refrigerators; food; many, many things to improve the standard of living of the workers — but not cigarettes. The question of cigarettes should be settled in another way, by setting prices which will serve to limit consumption and at the same time take up some of the excess currency in circulation. Naturally, these measures should be thoroughly analysed and discussed with the workers themselves. They have enough intelligence to decide whether or not the country should devote the work of 100,000 or 200,000 more people — which, by the way, we don't have — in addition to other resources to increasing the consumption of a harmful product sold at rock-bottom prices, while at the same time maintaining the same level of exports — which we can't afford to give up, as they are a source of the foreign exchange so necessary for our development. We could also say, "Let's ration cigarettes", and go ahead and ration them. Then we'd have a black market, we'd have the man exchanging his cigarettes for food.

Let's keep this kind of situation in mind, but, just the same, let's discuss and analyse the problem thoroughly.

Getting back to the matter of absentees: in the first place, their right to purchase durable goods is taken away. The time comes when a house in some district needs repairs, and we tell the man, "Just a minute, my friend, you don't deserve it. We are going to give priority to this man, who is a better worker, who does his job right and is always on time. You wait." Necessity isn't enough. When deciding between two people with the same need, we'll give preference to that worker who is a good, conscientious worker in that district. And when the time comes we say to a worker, "Look, you're getting to be a little lazier, a little less conscientious. We are going to deprive you of your quota in this workers' dining room, because you've been showing up for work only two or three times a week." This weapon is a little more drastic. We can go even further and deprive him of his clothing ration card.

With respect to a worker's salary, we have to suspend it if the circumstances so require. His family won't suffer, because they'll get social security. It's better to give the family of a loafer — you understand? — a pension, so they can buy what they need, than to have this loafer appear as the "big shot" who earns a salary and supports his family. (APPLAUSE) [*Jorge Risquet*: "When those elements don't show up, they won't get paid."]

They don't get paid now, right? But we'll have to look into the vanguard work centres, where we established certain provisions. [*Jorge Risquet*: "Yes, but not to include these types."]

Combating the antisocial elements

Right. We'll leave them out. There's a whole series of ways in which we can start isolating, cornering, and combating the antisocial elements — and, when necessary, we can apply the most rigorous measures, so as not to have a repetition of the case of the man who nine months ago was given a warning for the 17th time and still hasn't showed up for work. It isn't only a case of the harm they do society by their behavior but also the time they make the others lose.

We must be a little more rigorous. Now we can do it, because the majority of our workers are sufficiently conscious. The difficulties, the problems, the complexity of revolutionary work itself, help us to develop an awareness. For one thing can be said, and that is that it is a very difficult — an extremely difficult — process!

Now, another question: the battles for the solution of our economic problems and for production must be waged concretely, not abstractly, plant by plant, whether in graphic arts or in the Tellez factory, where several problems were pointed out. The

battle must be waged concretely in the thousands of production centres throughout the country. The administrative agencies must do concrete work, problem by problem. I repeat: problems are solved with concrete measures, not in the abstract.

In our opinion, this meeting has been a great experience; it has yielded a great deal of experience. I wonder what the results would have been if we had held a meeting of the sector in question — for example, that of construction or light industry — with the representatives of the corresponding administration.

Naturally, it's much better when the various sectors are present, since they are interrelated, and often a clearer picture of the problem emerges and the discussion is more fruitful when the various branches are represented at the meeting. Just imagine what it would be like if we had eight or ten of the most important sectors of the economy here, with their respective ministers and deputy ministers, and we held a discussion on the concrete problems faced in each production centre. (APPLAUSE)

The discussion wouldn't be limited to absenteeism or voluntary work or — and we'll have to take this up — the law or what to do about cigarettes.

Having this type of analysis and discussion would be of tremendous interest, because the comrades would be able to go into all the problems, and the minister or deputy minister, the director of an enterprise or the official in foreign trade or any other service who's involved could give whatever information he had, explaining what is and isn't being done and why, what can be done, and what's going to be done.

This would be of tremendous help for improving the state, for having us all become fully aware of our reality.

I tell you, it really hurts me to see one of those factories with a leaky roof. No minister has the right to have the roof of the ministry fixed — or even to have a building to house the ministry! — while the workers' building is threatening to collapse over their heads. This is what I think. This is what I sincerely believe! (APPLAUSE)

We must see to it that our officials have a clearer, more precise idea, a much more real understanding of just what's going on. We must see to it that ministers visit the work centres, gentlemen. Let them go there, because that is where things are learned. And, to tell the truth, any time I want to find out about some problem I don't go to the ministry; I go to the work centre. There is where I learn all about the difficulties and the problems. There is where one learns lessons, where one gains experience, where one catches the spirit of the working people.

We speak of inculcating a proletarian spirit, of creating consciousness. That's a lot of bunk. The way things are today, it is we who must go to the factories, where the workers are, to learn lessons in consciousness from them, not teach them lessons in consciousness. The man who is there in that factory, carrying sacks on his back for

eight hours a day at full tilt, or perched up on a scaffold, or hammering away hour after hour, or working with fire and steel, has a greater proletarian consciousness than we, because he is there, immersed in his work, in his struggle, face to face with all the problems and all the realities, overcome by a feeling of helplessness on seeing many problems that nobody bothers to explain to him and about which he can't do anything.

Thus, by going to the factories, we can let the workers in on whatever we know but they don't and pick up whatever information they have that we don't. And, above all, we're there in the midst of necessity, of struggle, seeing a worker with torn pants or boots full of holes. I'm sure that any sensitive individual who witnesses this will immediately be twice as concerned — or three times as concerned — over the problem as he was before. As a starter, he's going to learn about the problem — in case he didn't know about it before.

Then start things going among the workers — we've seen what's happened, with shoes that are falling apart; get in contact with the workers in the shoe industry. Establish contacts with the various factories. Often, these are all dependent on one little old hole-in-the-wall place. Don't go to a consolidated enterprise, go to the factory, and tell them, "Look, according to the plan, your unit is the one that's supposed to make this product for me. When can I have it? When will it be ready?" If the unit is short in labour power — as in the case of the small shop that manufactures the rollers for graphic arts — tell them, "We're sending you three men from our factory to help make the rollers, because we'll have to stop production if we don't get them soon." If it's a case of a small bushing, go to the plant that's supposed to make them. Establish a series of contacts among factories, among workers, always struggling to keep production up. The workers' principal duty is to struggle for production. Why? Because only through production can living conditions be improved. Only through production can there be more footwear, more clothing, more everything.

However, don't be misled into thinking it's easy to solve these problems.

We have more means for solving the problem of shoes. Plastics are going to be a great help to us, and we should be producing some 20 million pairs of plastic shoes next year. This will go a long way toward solving the problem of women's and children's shoes. What with plastic, leather, and other types, we can come close to 40 million pairs. More than four pairs per person. Now the thing is to work on improving quality — especially in leather shoes. To turn out shoes that will not fall apart in a matter of minutes, with soles that stay put, not junk. We must study everything that has a bearing on this problem.

The problem of fabrics is a tougher nut to crack. Even if the labour-power shortage is solved, we still don't have enough installed capacity. Moreover, both the factories

and the equipment have put in many years of service, a lot of them are US-built and we don't always have the raw materials at hand. The problem is aggravated by the fact that large amounts of clothing are distributed for certain activities, such as the sugar harvest, that call for a considerable amount of material. Moreover, the population has increased, while we have imported less in the way of textile goods because we ran into problems in maintaining these import levels. And the per capita distribution is very low, gentlemen. It's really shocking how little clothing is being distributed to the population. And this is one of the problems to which we must give special attention.

We have two tremendous problems at this moment: housing and textiles. The government, the country's leadership organisations, those who handle the economy, must do everything under the sun to come up with a means to alleviate the housing problem — which is becoming a supercritical one — and to alleviate the problem of the textile shortage during the next two, three, or four years, while we increase our factories' capacity and finally settle the problem.

In other words, these problems call for special efforts by the nation and an optimal utilisation of our means and resources.

Today, when I saw all that hardware lying there in the warehouse of the Ministry of the Sugar Industry (MINAZ), I realised that MINAZ, a sector of our economy, capitalising on the ten-million-ton harvest, had gone wild and had got in a stock of steel that hasn't even been touched and machinery that hasn't yet been installed. They don't even know what to do with what they've got, while other factories, that would have been improved as a result of a better distribution of the resources that were devoted to the plan for the ten million tons, were neglected.

Now then, the technocrats, the "brains", the "geniuses", and the "superscientists" — all of them knew exactly what should be done in order to produce the ten million tons of sugar. Well, first of all, it was proved that they didn't really know what was what; and in the second place, they exploited the economy, channeling large amounts of resources to that sector. There were many cases of a shortage of steel plates to build a sugar-cane-planting machine while they held onto tens of thousands of tons of steel.

Therefore, the work in connection with planning and distribution has to be much improved over what it has been up to now. I tell you, these problems are anything but easy to solve. They are difficult and complex. There are some problems which are objective, and we'll have to see how we go about tackling them, while others are completely subjective. It is in connection with these things of a subjective order — the workers' attitude, productivity, organisation, administration, leadership, and the leaders' conduct — that we have to attack full force in the immediate future, because this is where we can advance.

I was saying that this meeting was extraordinarily enlightening and that, by all means, we must have many more. It has provided us with experience, leading up to a meeting of another type — not for discussing voluntary work or absenteeism, I repeat, but for taking up the concrete problems in each important work centre.

It's a pity that our labour movement isn't more developed, so we could bring the trade union representative from every important factory to this meeting — that is, have the representatives of the trade union, of the Vanguard Workers Movement, and even the party nucleus come here and then, gentlemen, bring the factory managers to the meeting, too, and sit down and analyse all these problems together. (APPLAUSE)

It has been proved that with a few microphones and a number of comrades to take them from one speaker to the next, everybody can get a chance to speak. Then, if we get a little more light down there in the back, we can see those who are sitting there. And even if we have to hash these problems over for three days straight, look at all the lessons we can gain and all the ideas that will come to light!

What would we accomplish by doing this? We would also be teaching our workers how to solve problems; to submit ideas; to discuss things; to meditate; to have a more complete idea of the interrelationship that exists among all the factories and branches; to have a broader understanding of all problems; and to have the arguments needed for fighting, speaking out, and struggling.

I realise how hard it must be for the comrades in the trade union group and the comrades of the party in that factory where the roof has been leaking for five years and they're still waiting for somebody to show up. I understand their predicament very well. It must be really rough. It calls for a superrevolutionary, a genius, to stay there, wielding a good argument, because things like that are very difficult to understand.

I was saying that there are some people who haven't the slightest idea of how complex a process can be, who can't find any explanations for all these problems and inefficiency and who wind up by losing faith.

The fact that our country has come this far, that our country has successfully put up resistance for 11 years against the world's most powerful imperialist country — the one which could do the most damage to us economically, militarily, and ideologically; a country which had us completely indoctrinated, which had inculcated us with its capitalist, egotistical, thoroughly reactionary policy and its vices, with everything — the fact that our country was capable of holding up against all this demonstrates the strength of the revolution, the power of the revolution. But we have shown a much greater capacity to face the enemy, to lay down our lives, or do anything else that may be necessary, and even to make great sacrifices, than to develop the tremendous energy and initiative of the masses with a view to tackling our problems.

This is a kind of atomic energy, and, once we release it, nothing will be able to stand in its way. Therefore, we must learn how to develop the science of liberating the nuclear power of the masses.

It is up to our party and our mass organisations to develop this technology.

Our comrade the baker was saying that we have a system of social security and rights so generous that they have no equal even in the other communist countries. What a shame it would be if the revolution should have to revert to the old ways; if we should have to begin charging for education, medical attention, housing, children's day-care centres, workers' dining rooms, baseball — No, never!

Socialist state must be democratic

If, through the work of the masses, we win this battle, we will be able to make great progress. We will make great progress if we establish the greatest possible degree of democratisation of the process. No state can be more democratic than a socialist state; no state can or should be more democratic. If a socialist state is not democratic, it will fail. The socialist state is society organised for the solution of the problems of the masses, depending on the consciousness of the individual, not the life-or-death struggle of capitalism.

If we were to use capitalist methods to solve our problems, what kind of a communist man, what kind of a man with a superior mind, culture, and consciousness would we be creating? Impossible! We cannot be socialists with capitalist methods.

If socialism does not spring from the masses, it will fail, because it must work for the masses and it can only solve our problems with the support of the masses. No longer is it the case of the money-making capitalist tending his shop, tending his factory, tending whatever it is, staying there all day long and functioning under the laws of the capitalist economy; now it's a case of the administration of the economy by all the people, the work of all the people.

Without the masses, socialism would lose the battle and become bureaucratic. It would have to adopt capitalist methods and retreat in the field of ideology. No society can be more democratic than socialist society, because without the masses, socialism could not triumph.

Now there are no contradictions in our society; there are no political parties to represent the landlords, bourgeoisie, and bankers; there is only one party, with one ideology, and one society, to the extent that we are able to eliminate all the hangovers from the past. Why, then, not establish the greatest possible participation of that society in the struggle for its life, if — as I firmly believe to be the case — this is the most beautiful thing about a socialist society?

It isn't a case of a group of superintelligent men directing the passive masses for their own good. That is not revolution. That cannot happen in real life, because nobody can solve problems through administrative methods.

Remember that in a collectivist society battles can be won only with the widest possible participation of the masses in the solution of their problems.

Socialism can go forward, and it can overcome the great obstacles with which it is faced — especially in the case of an underdeveloped economy such as ours — only through the widest possible participation of the masses.

We must eliminate administrative methods, because they don't provide real solutions. In the first stage of the revolution, their use was understandable. Then we didn't even have an ideology. What did we have? Terrible ideological confusion: many people influenced by reactionary, capitalist, and egotistical ideas. Today our people have made great progress. Now we must do away with all administrative methods and use mass methods everywhere: from the district right on up to the national level.

We can't do it from one day to the next. It would be absurd for a few of us to get together and start writing a constitution and expect everything to function perfectly, just like magic. We have to move "with all deliberate speed" — but in a relatively short period of time. "All deliberate speed" doesn't mean we'll wait ten years or anything like that. We must start with some of these channels: organising a district, holding meetings like this one with the main officials from the key production sectors. All these are steps.

One of the most important steps is the establishment of a strong labour movement, so that, together with the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution and the Federation of Cuban Women, we will have a strong labour movement. This is one of the first steps of making things completely democratic. Starting with the workers, starting with the trade unions, and holding absolutely free elections.

Where we find that the workers elect a corrupt trade union leader from the past, this should set off political alarm bells concerning the confusion, backwardness, and bad political work that has been done there. Where we find that they elect an absentee, or somebody who is not a good worker, this should also set alarm bells ringing. Where they elect an agitator or demagogue who takes advantage of a real grievance, it will show that our political work there has left much to be desired.

And I am sure that a work centre with a proletarian consciousness will not elect an absentee, liar, political hack, or corrupt trade union leader from the past, because the workers know enough to see through all these people.

We are going to trust our workers and hold trade union elections in all locals — they will now be called locals — in all the factories right away. (APPLAUSE)

They will be absolutely free, and the workers will choose the candidates. Nobody can buy off the masses: no demagogue can fool the masses.

We must do this in the same way that the exemplary workers are selected. Then the matter must be submitted to an absolutely democratic vote, so that the workers will freely pick their leaders. If they should elect a man who is unworthy of representing the cause and spirit of the proletariat — and I am sure this will happen in only a very few cases — this will give us an idea of the political situation at that work centre, and we will know that the centre is in bad shape from the political point of view, because there is a lack of awareness and the workers have let themselves be taken in by a liar, a demagogue, a charlatan, or one who is any number of things. This would not weaken the revolution, however; rather, it would serve to keep it alert, vigilant, and militant with respect to the masses.

Labour movement must be democratic

We will start by making the labour movement completely democratic. If the labour movement isn't democratic, it is good for nothing.

If the worker has really been elected by a majority vote of all his comrades, he will have authority; he won't be a nobody who has been placed there by decree. He will have the moral authority of his election, and when the revolution establishes a line he will go all out to defend and fight for that line. And, if the leader is not true to the spirit of the revolution, the masses can remove him at any time.

We must make it clear that any official can be removed at any time. He can be removed whenever another election is called, so nobody should get the idea that simply because he was elected one day he can spend a year doing just as he damn pleases. In three months or at any other time there can be another meeting or election, and out he goes, and somebody else goes in. But all this must be done through democratic procedures. If the labour movement isn't democratic, then it is good for nothing.

If a socialist society doesn't have the support of the masses, it will fail. And, to have the support of the masses, it must be as democratic as possible and eliminate administrative methods altogether.

If millions of people put their minds to it, we can solve any problem. If we put millions of people to work conscientiously, we can solve any administrative problem. Anybody who is doing things badly, any minister whose work isn't up to par, any regional that is abusing the people ... none of the problems which were discussed here can last if the masses take a hand in things. Then there'll be sand on the beach, not rocks; the things won't rot; there won't be any waste; the jute bags won't be lying

around; and the other things won't be sitting at the docks, abandoned.

None of this will happen once we really get the masses thinking and acting in a conscious manner. (APPLAUSE)

We are absolutely sure of this, and we think of the great reserve of intelligence to be found in the minds of the people, just waiting to be tapped. There have been many comrades who have spoken here with a magnificent spirit, presenting clear ideas, who have greatly impressed us by the way in which they set forth their problems here. There are scores of thinking minds in our working class.

The ability to think is not the exclusive property of a small leadership group. All the people can think. We must look for all these minds. They won't necessarily all be found among those who occupy certain positions.

Can't a member of the Vanguard Workers Movement come here to present a problem, as has been done now? I think that when we hold a meeting like this, we should bring vanguard workers here as invited guests, in addition to the members of the party and trade union representatives, even though they may not hold any posts in the organisations.

Of course, the most likely thing is that the workers will elect the most talented, the best of their comrades. The most likely thing is that these comrades will already be in the trade union or Vanguard Workers Movement. But there may be cases of skilled and revolutionary workers who hold no official position because, given the task they carry out in the factory, it would not be a very good idea to have them handling a trade union job as well. These cases can occur; there can be workers who are better off free of all these kinds of activity, but still they should be able to come here and discuss important matters.

If we advance along this road, we will win the battle. We believe this is the way we will win the eight, ten, or 12 battles we will have to wage.

The number one contribution of the workers, first — I'm referring to the process of making the process completely democratic — is that of making their own organisation completely democratic, establishing a strong and powerful labour movement which, in order to be strong, powerful, and a true labour movement, must be completely democratic in every sense of the word. Don't forget that. A strong and powerful labour movement must be completely democratic. The battles must be waged by ideas and words, not by decree. The demagogues must be confronted with firm ideas and solid arguments. Revolutionaries cannot be timid; they must be trained in the art of debate and must stand by the truth.

Here we have seen comrades who have participated in the debate: some with one argument, and others with another. Leaders, cadres, and party members in general

must be trained in the art of debate, in how to defend their point of view, in reasoning and in considering all these problems.

I believe this will prove to be a truly historic meeting. But we're not going to give it that title! Whether or not it is considered to be historic will depend on how well we continue working along the lines which have been outlined here.

All the debate at this meeting will be published, even though I realise you have spoken more freely than you would have if there had been radio microphones or TV cameras in front of you. When we speak over radio or TV, millions of people are listening in, the enemy is listening in, the guy abroad is listening in, and he will have everything you say right there. All that. Although I believe the revolution should never be afraid to say anything, no matter what.

We believe a good job has been done. It is true that the turns were too long and the comrades who spoke at the end were placed under a great pressure of time, hardly getting any chance to speak. This is most unfortunate, because if these comrades had spoken earlier, they might have contributed ideas just like the others. What we will have to do, based on the experience we have gained here, is set up time limits. When there are interruptions, they won't be counted, because sometimes they are necessary in order to ask questions from which worthwhile information may be obtained. I believe this can be done without having to go on till 3:00 in the morning. Perhaps we should take a Sunday and say, "Voluntary work: a meeting at the CTC." (LAUGHTER & APPLAUSE)

We could hold the meeting from 8:00 a.m. to noon, from 2:00 to 7:00, and from 9:00 to midnight. That would make 12 hours. (APPLAUSE) [*Jorge Risquet*: "With an entertainment program."] Well, at least with piped-in music, or with some of the 150 performers who aren't working coming here to play the guitar. Get the idea? And we could discuss things.

Why do we have a phobia against meetings? Because there have been stupid meetings, mechanical affairs at which everybody says the same old things over and over. But meetings like this ... look, we've been here for hours and hours and hours, but, believe you me, I prefer this to the best movie. We've really learned something here. We've gotten a good look at what life is really like.

Those of us who are deeply interested in things social and political have really gotten a big bang out of this meeting, as we've discovered, delved into, and learned a lot of new things.

We'd really like to be able to be everywhere at the same time. We'd like to be able to visit all the factories, go around more. We wish we were children's tops — not the yo-yos a worker was talking about here, but tops. (LAUGHTER) They're not the same

thing. (LAUGHTER) [*Shouts from the crowd*: “It goes up and down.”]

Well, we can't go around so much, but I will try to visit as many factories as possible. To please the workers? That's not what we're trying to do. We're trying to get a firsthand idea of the problems. In all those places you learn scores of things every day.

And do you know how we can learn how to be efficient and how our ministers can learn how to be efficient functionaries of the people? Do you know how? By going to the factories! [*Shouts from the crowd*: “Like Che did.”] (APPLAUSE)

Che was one of the foremost advocates of moral incentives and of the worth of the workers, voluntary work, contacts among the workers, and democratic processes; he felt all these things deeply. That is why the baker's quoting Che's “There are still a lot of people who are not employing themselves” is so apropos. He was referring to people who worked in a plant but weren't producing. How did Che put it, exactly? [*Baker*: “Unemployment has come to an end, but there are still a lot of people who are not employing themselves but are still drawing their salaries.”]

“A lot of people who are not employing themselves.” Yes, that's right. That's nothing but the plain, unvarnished truth.

Che felt and was sensitive to all these problems. He was always trying to set an example of what a worker should be like.

Today, when I was at the factory, I said, “You have to establish contacts.” The people there answered, “Yes, CILOS [Committees of Local Industries].” And I asked them, “What do you mean, ‘CILOS’?” And they answered, “Che said CILOS had to be established among the factories.” This is the same thing we're talking about: establishing contacts among the factories.

I'd like to repeat this: in order to be efficient functionaries of the people, the best thing those who work in administration can do is to go to the factories. That's a sure way of discovering what the realities are, encouraging the workers, and explaining things to them.

While I was at the factory the workers there asked me about a blade for a cutting machine, but what could I tell them? I wished I were from the Maquimport Enterprise, from one of those agencies, or from their own enterprise so I could answer, “Yes, comrades, this type of blade has been ordered; they are coming from such and such a place,” or “They aren't coming,” or “Only so many have been supplied,” or “We're doing such and so about securing them.” One thing for sure, it's impossible to do any cutting without blades. That's a fact.

Our ministers must fight for better solutions at the levels where the decisions are made. They must say, “Comrades, I ask you to take this, that, and the other into

consideration, because these things are affecting this, that, and the other.” This should be done all the time, because a serious problem may arise someday, and if those who direct state affairs are not made aware of it, then what can we do? If, at the time of deciding what resources we must have, we are not aware of certain problems, of things that should have priority, something entailing serious consequences, then we make our plans mechanically and poorly. Why? Because otherwise the various ministers begin asking the moon, and the bill runs into the millions. Then, when you add up all the bills, you cry “Impossible!” And then the trimming process begins. At times, the inexpensive blade so badly needed at the plant goes by the board. Instead of ordering a blade to cut with, in cutting down, you cut it out. That’s right. A blade can be cut out before it can do any cutting. (LAUGHTER) That’s the problem. Then, we find ourselves without a simple blade. But I can’t understand how such a place could operate without such a cutting blade. That would be like expecting a textile mill to operate without yarn and shuttles. It just can’t be. Or a printing shop without paper.

If the ministers were much better informed and in closer touch with reality, a much more efficient and better balanced plan could be drawn up. Then, all the purchasing efforts would be coordinated and everybody would be better informed about all the problems.

You may think, sometimes, that when we speak about the problems in a factory we really know what we’re talking about, right? Not necessarily. The fact is, we have a truly encyclopedic ignorance of the factories’ problems. I wish I could be really up on all the problems in the factories, for I’m sure that the more I know about them the more I’ll be able to help find some kind of a solution for them. And the same thing goes for all the other comrades: the more they know about the problems, I’m sure the more they can and will do something to solve them. But I don’t think anybody will ever do anything about a problem he knows nothing about. That goes without saying.

I’ve already kept you here much too long, and you must be tired. I hope when you leave here you’ll go filled with enthusiasm for work. However, you mustn’t think that we’ve actually solved any problems. Carry that thought with you: we haven’t solved any problems here; all we’ve done is take a short step forward. You should now keep on moving forward, starting from that modest first step, which is no more than a mere beginning. Start working on the most important and urgent things first; begin to meditate, think, and see things clearly — experiences, problems, everything. Start preparing — let’s say, for our next meeting — to tackle the concrete problems of production. But concretely, among ourselves here, without any newspaper coverage ... that is, with newsmen, but without publicity, or with a minimum of publicity.

I’m sure the newsmen here are more interested in what is being discussed than in

what they can write about it. I'm positive of that. Yesterday I noticed they were exceedingly interested in the meeting and the topics being discussed.

We'll hold our meeting quietly and do our work. We already have proof that a mass gathering of people can reason. The only thing is, we must work out some method to assure everyone of a chance to speak and say what he has to say and have some debates or discussions within that framework and let everybody express himself with absolute freedom. And, when the time comes to discuss problems, be prepared to present concrete problems. Problems from any and all factories can be discussed here. If in Havana Province we have, say, 67% of all the factories — apart from the sugar industry - and we meet here with representatives from those factories, which account for 60 or 70% of the nation's production, and we solve the problems of those factories, waging a battle against the concrete problems of each one of them ...

Comrades, no one, by himself, could wage a successful battle against concrete problems from here. Not even Risquet could do it by himself. Risquet tries to supply the labour power that is requested, and I do something along these lines, too. But if the ministers, deputy ministers, and other comrades are gathered here and we wage a battle against the concrete problems of every work centre... Ah! Then I feel sure that, within a year, we'll have a radically different situation from the one we're faced with now.

It'll be interesting to see what we can do and how much we can advance in a year, following this policy. And be able to actually measure our progress — as we have in the case of the pressure cookers, of which we are now turning out over 1000 a day and refrigerators, of which 60 are being produced every day. That's some progress, already. Everybody here applauded when I mentioned the refrigerators, because refrigerators really mean something. This means that 15,000 families will benefit from getting refrigerators for their homes. And 400,000 families will get pressure cookers. Of course, if they can put something in those pressure cookers, so much the better! (LAUGHTER)

Well, comrades, that's it for now. We'll see you again before too long.

Patria o muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)

5. Fighting for Women's Equality

The Second Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) was held November 25-29, 1974. The following is the major part of the speech Fidel gave at its conclusion. The text is taken from *Granma Weekly Review*, December 8, 1974.



Dear guests;

Dear comrades of the party and the government; Dear comrades of the Federation of Cuban Women:

We have reached the end of this beautiful congress. And it is not easy to sum up an event so filled with accomplishments and hope.

In the first place it has not been entirely our congress; we have shared it amply with a worthy and representative delegation of the revolutionary women of the entire world.

The presence at this congress of such prestigious comrades as Fanny Edelmann, Valentina Tereshkova, Angela Davis, Hortensia Bussi; the presence of numerous women from the fraternal countries of Latin America; the presence of the Arab women, and especially the delegation of the heroic Palestinian people; the presence of the women of Indochina and among them, of the thousand-times heroic Vietnamese people; [*Applause*] of the Korean women, of the women of the revolutionary and progressive peoples of Africa, of the women from our sister socialist countries, and the representation of the working women of Western Europe; doesn't this tell us that the representatives of the noblest and most just causes in the whole world have gathered here?

Across oceans, boundaries, languages, the representatives of the progressive women of the entire world have joined hands at this congress. And there is no need to use the term "foreigner" to characterise these delegations, because at all times we have experienced the feeling that we are part of the same homeland, of the same people:

the universal homeland, the human population.

This proves that nothing except exploitation and injustice separates people, and nothing unites people more than the community of ideals and the aspiration to justice.

The topics that we have been discussing at this congress have a truly universal interest. They are not just the problems of Cuban women but the problems of the vast majority of women in the world.

It is clear that women need to participate in the struggle against exploitation, against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, racism; in a word: in the struggle for national liberation. But when the objective of national liberation is finally achieved, women must continue struggling for their own liberation within human society. (APPLAUSE)

We have brought along some data from a report made by the United Nations Department of Statistics that reveals women's situation in most of the world.

Women represent 34% of the work force, that is, 515 million workers. By the end of the present decade, it is estimated that this figure will rise to 600 million, and in the year 2000, to 842 million.

In Western Europe and North America, women constitute between 30% and 40% of the work force.

In spite of the increasing number of women in the ranks of the employed, particularly in professional and technical posts, the United Nations report points out that they are underpaid in comparison to men.

"Although it is true," says the report, "that the legal barriers against equal job opportunities for women are few and the principle of equal pay for equal work is now universally accepted, in practice the situation demands the urgent application of measures to eliminate such discrimination."

In many industrialised countries, women's wages are approximately 50% to 80% of men's for the same hours of work. In the developing nations, the low salaries for women indicate that women are engaged in the lowest levels of work and jobs in terms of skill and pay.

In general, this report refers to the question of wages. Of course, it does not analyse the infinite number of problems that affect women in the class society of the capitalist world.

Naturally, in the socialist countries women have advanced a long distance along the road of their liberation. But if we ask ourselves about our own situation: we who are a socialist country with almost 16 years of revolution, can we really say that the Cuban women have acquired full equality of rights in practice, and that they are absolutely integrated into Cuban society?

We can analyse certain data. For example, before the revolution there were 194,000 working women. Of them, according to a report read here, 70% were domestics. Today we have three times more women working. The figure for women in civilian state jobs, which as you know include the majority of productive activities, services, and administration, is 590,000 women out of a total of 2,331,000 persons working. That is, 25.3% of the workers are women. Nevertheless, the number of women holding leadership posts in all this apparatus of production, services, and administration, is only 15%. Only 12.79% of our party members are women. A notably low figure. And the number of women who work as party cadres and officials is only 6%.

But we have an example that is still more illustrative and is related to the elections held for People's Power in the province of Matanzas. The number of women selected as candidates was 7.6% and the number of women elected was 3%, to which the comrade from Matanzas referred.

The figures are really something to be concerned about, to make us do something about this problem. Because in those elections the candidates were proposed by the masses, and the masses only proposed 7.6% women candidates, when women make up approximately 50% of the population. Only 3% of those elected by the masses were women.

Who here at this congress, what invited delegate who has been here with you for a week can understand, imagine, or conceive how, with such a strong and such a politically advanced women's movement, only 3% women were chosen in elections?

And these figures reflect nothing more than the reality that after more than 15 years of revolution, we are still politically and culturally behind in this area.

The reality is that there are still objective and subjective factors that discriminate against women.

Naturally, if we compare our present situation with what existed before the revolution, the advances are enormous. It isn't even possible to make any kind of comparison between women's situation before the revolution and their present situation. And the situation which the revolution encountered fully justified the creation of the Federation of Cuban Women. Because our experience teaches us that when an underdeveloped country such as ours liberates itself and begins to construct socialism, a mass organisation like this one is necessary, since women have innumerable tasks to face up to within the revolutionary process. And for this reason we believe that the decision to develop this women's movement, to create this organisation that was born on August 23, 1960, was really a wise decision because the work this organisation has done could not have been carried forward by any other means.

What would the party have done without this organisation of women? What

would the revolution have done?

It is true that we have other magnificent mass organisations, such as the trade unions, the CDRs, the peasant organisations, the youth and student organisations, the Pioneers, and even the organisation of the day-care centres. But what organisation could have fulfilled the tasks that the Federation of Cuban Women has accomplished?

Comrade Vilma gave a significant historical account of those innumerable tasks, but it is sufficient to recall, first of all, the struggle to develop culture and political understanding in Cuban women, because in capitalist society women really remain culturally and politically downtrodden, they have even fewer educational opportunities than men, and many times women in class society are deceived precisely because of that low political level and are frequently used against revolutionary processes.

It is enough to recall that among those tasks were some of great importance. In the first place, the tasks related to the defence of the revolution and the homeland, the struggle against illiteracy, the struggle for the education of the daughters of peasants, the struggle in preparing domestics for doing productive jobs, the struggle against prostitution, the struggle to incorporate women into the work force, the struggle to create day-care centres, the tasks of support for education, the public health campaigns, the social work, the deepening of political and ideological consciousness among women, and the struggle for the development of an internationalist spirit in Cuban women.

The federation has worked in all those fields and has successfully completed all its tasks. And only the women themselves could have carried out those activities with such efficiency.

But now, in this present stage of the revolution, women have a basic task, a historical battle to wage.

And what is that task? What is that battle? Could you give the answer?

What was the crux, the centre of the analysis and the efforts of this congress? The struggle for women's equality. (APPLAUSE) The struggle for the full integration of Cuban women into society!

And that is really a historical battle. And we believe that this objective is precisely the focal point of this congress, because, in practice, women's full equality still does not exist. (APPLAUSE)

And we revolutionaries must understand this, and women themselves must understand it. It is not, of course, only a task for women. It is a task for the whole society! (APPLAUSE)

But no one need be frightened because women's equality in society is being discussed, although some were frightened when the discussion of the Family Code

draft was launched. (LAUGHTER & APPLAUSE) And Blas [Roca] explained to us here the many conversations he has had with certain male comrades who didn't understand, and he summed up his ideas with a beautiful argument that man's happiness was not possible without woman's happiness. (APPLAUSE)

And we don't see why anyone should be frightened, because what should really frighten us as revolutionaries is that we have to admit the reality that women still do not have absolute equality in Cuban society. (APPLAUSE)

What must concern us as revolutionaries is that the work of the revolution is not yet complete.

Of course, in this lack of equality, in this lack of full integration, as I said, there are objective factors and there are subjective factors. Naturally, everything that prevents the incorporation of women into the work force makes this process of integration difficult, makes this process of achieving full equality difficult. And you have seen that precisely when women are incorporated into the work force, when women stop performing the traditional and historical activities, is when these problems begin to show up.

In conversations with some of the delegates to this congress, they expressed their great satisfaction and joy that during these days of the congress, many of their husbands had remained at home taking care of the children so they could come to the congress. (APPLAUSE) It is unquestionable that if those women had not been integrated into the federation and had not carried out this work, if they had not been revolutionary militants and had not been participating in this congress, such a problem never would have arisen in their homes, and the opportunity for those husbands to become aware of such a necessity and of such duties would never even have existed.

Among the objective factors that still hinder women's incorporation into the educational system and the work force, some were pointed out here, such as the lack of sufficient day-care centres, of sufficient semiboarding schools,* of sufficient boarding schools, problems concerning the hours in which the schools function; to which we can add such factors as the lack of sufficient jobs for women throughout the country and, of course, the fact that many women do not have the level of skill for productive work.

In this area, as far as the daycare centres and education are concerned, over and beyond the great efforts that the revolution has already made, during the next few years — and particularly in the next five years from '76 to '80 — a still greater effort will be made, in the first place, to satisfy the growing educational needs of our people and

* Schools where lunches are served, enabling the children not to have to go home in the middle of the day. As of March 1980, 280,000 primary school children attended these types of schools.

at the same time to facilitate the incorporation of women into the work force.

The present capacity of day-care centres is approximately 50,000 children. In the first version of the next five-year plan, the idea of constructing 400 day-care centres with state brigades has been considered, apart from those the microbrigades construct,* (APPLAUSE) in order to increase the capacity up to 150,000 children. That is, three times the capacity we now have.

We are also proposing to construct 400 semiboarding schools for 300 pupils each, or the equivalent, in order to increase the capacity by 120,000 children; to construct no less than a thousand high schools with a capacity of more than a half million additional boarding school students.

Special attention will also be given to a type of school that you know is very important, the special schools for pupils with certain problems. The proposal is to build capacity for 40,000 new pupils in this type of special education.

At the same time, the revolution will continue developing the public health sector in the next few years: 49 new hospitals, 110 polyclinics, 19 dental clinics, 51 homes for the aged, and 16 homes for the disabled will be built throughout the country.

The total investment in education and public health in the next five years will be approximately 1.65 billion pesos. (APPLAUSE)

We believe this is good news for the members of the federation. (APPLAUSE) And it does not mean starting something new, but rather increasing the rhythm of what is now being built, because more than 180 high schools accommodating 500 students each are now being built per year. (APPLAUSE)

The hospital construction program is moving ahead; the first brigades for the construction of day-care centres have also been organised. And the brigades necessary to construct the 400 daycare centres that have been programmed and to construct the special schools, the polyclinics, the homes for the aged, for the disabled, and the semiboarding schools at the primary level-those brigades that are still lacking will be organised beginning in 1975.

This program is in progress and we are perfectly sure that it will be carried forward.

During the discussion we could appreciate the enormous importance that you attach to these problems and especially to the problems of education. It can be said that a large part of the discussion in the congress revolved around these questions. Yet

* The microbrigades are a program to help ease Cuba's housing shortage by organising brigades of workers from a workplace who are relieved of some of their normal responsibilities to build houses for themselves and others in their workplace. They have also built schools, nurseries, community buildings, shopping centres, polyclinics, and parks.

in the fields of education and public health our country already occupies first place among all the countries of Latin America. (APPLAUSE)

And we are really just beginning. It is precisely in the last years that it has been possible to provide a great impulse to school construction. And there were not enough installations nor enough cadres, nor enough teachers. How many difficulties the revolution has had to confront in order to carry forward these educational programs and to carry forward the public health program, when out of the 6000 doctors we had, almost all of them concentrated in the city of Havana, the Yankees took 3000 from us. One of the many forms the imperialists use to carry out their crimes; because if in other places — as in Vietnam — they shell and bomb in order to kill people, here they tried to take away all the doctors so the people would die, (APPLAUSE) just as they blockaded us and still blockade us to try to starve our people to death.

Of course, today we already have 9000 doctors, and they are magnificent doctors, (APPLAUSE) and more than 6000 young people are studying in the schools of medicine. (APPLAUSE) So that not only are we able to satisfy our medical necessities, and do so with increasing quality, but we have also even been able to organise medical brigades to help other fraternal peoples. (APPLAUSE) And in the years to come we will graduate some 1000 doctors each year, (APPLAUSE) and some of those doctors will be able to offer their internationalist services. (APPLAUSE) And our medical services will go on improving in quality and will go on conquering disease and will continue eradicating some of those diseases.

The minister of public health explained what the infant mortality rate is now: 27.4 per thousand live births. In Brazil-where there aren't even mortality statistics-it is estimated that it may be between 150 and 200. And unfortunately this is what takes place in many other Latin American countries. This means that for every infant that dies in Cuba, four, five, six, or seven infants die in other countries of Latin America. The same is true of many other problems: mortality at other ages-because we are talking about mortality in the first year of birth-medical care in general, education.

The minister of education explained the figures that reflect the progress of education in Cuba: all children enrolled in schools, the growing number of those graduating from the sixth grade, and the explosion we are already having at the high school level, with the result that all the construction we're building isn't enough.

But now in the years to come the problem will be not only the number of children studying, but also the quality of our education. And our education will improve in quality year by year with the new system that is being projected and with the growing number of young people studying to be teachers and joining the Pedagogical Detachment.*

So that if we now already occupy the very first place among Latin American countries in education and public health, what will it be in five or six more years? What will it be in future years, given this rhythm of construction, this rhythm of advancement we now have?

And this is the blockaded country, the country against which the imperialists have committed their crime of blockade. And we might ask ourselves: why the blockade? And what has happened in the countries they didn't blockade? What has happened in education? What has happened in public health? How many illiterates are there? How many children without schools? And how many children die each year for lack of food, medicine, medical treatment, and everything?

Then what did imperialism want for the peoples of Latin America? To maintain that situation! And what did they want for Cuba? To prevent us from doing what we are doing! And, it is true, they have achieved one objective, yes: keeping Latin America in that humiliating present situation. But on the other hand, with all their crimes and their blockades, they haven't been able to prevent the social successes of the Cuban revolution. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

And these truths, these realities, can no longer be hidden, no matter what desperate measures imperialism and its lackeys resort to. And these truths are beginning to become known throughout the world.

So our country can continue its march forward serenely and confidently. These 15 years have not passed in vain. And the revolution is more secure today than it has ever been before, the revolution is more solid today than it has ever been before, and the revolution is advancing today at a rhythm it has never had before.

I have said all this, speaking of the objective factors that hinder the integration of women, referring to schools, hospitals, etc. And I really simply wanted to express to you the ideas and the projects related to the solution of these problems.

You come from all over the country. There are comrades here from Guane, from the Isle of Pines, from the province of Havana, from Matanzas, Jaguey, the Escambray, Sancti Spiritus, Sola, Veguitas, Guantanamo; (APPLAUSE) and you know how the revolution's schools are springing up all over, transforming the landscape and the life of our countryside. (APPLAUSE) And we will march forward at this rhythm.

The question has been raised here as to whether the same measures were being applied to the junior high schools in the countryside as to the semiboarding schools

* The Pedagogical Detachments were formed to meet the shortage of teachers arising from the postrevolution "baby boom". They were composed of 16-year-old young people who received their training while teaching in the elementary schools.

with respect to the children of working mothers, and actually there are some regions where all the pupils, all of them, are now in the junior high schools in the countryside, all the pupils of that level. There are various regions in the country where of course this problem no longer exists because all the young people are taken care of.

The minister of education explained the factors that hinder this, taking into consideration the objective of not having a single youth without a corresponding high school, not one sixth grade graduate who does not go on to a higher level; the same principle for the difficulties involved can be applied to these schools as well. But we believe that, even so, something can still be done to favor the children of working mothers, high school students, in certain regions, in certain provinces; because many times they take out a complete school in order to put a primary school there, for example, and they have to find locations for those pupils in any case.

But this proposal was a just proposal; that is the aspiration expressed here by some comrade delegates, and at the same time it is also only fair that the ministry's difficulties be taken into account since its number-one problem is to make all the changes and combinations possible in order to achieve the objective of having no sixth grade graduate left without a school.

We also believe that in the long run the question of auxiliary teachers will have to be solved. We believe that the country will have to face up to the necessity of employing a specific number of comrades in this task, and that it will be necessary to analyse the economic aspects and also the facilities that those auxiliary teachers must be given.

Given that there are presently close to 600,000 working women, and 250,000 more are to be incorporated in the next five years, there will be no other solution than to attack those problems related to the hour that the primary schools and the semiboarding schools begin to function, and the problems of Saturdays.

The question of vacations was also raised. And we believe that the country has the resources to deal with this problem of summer vacations, since we are building hundreds of junior high schools in the countryside, and those installations could also be used for vacation plans. They are magnificent installations, and we are analysing the possibilities of using them during the summer for vacation plans.

Many of these problems that you have raised here can be solved with what we already have today. And in the long run, all these questions that hinder the incorporation of women into the work force—the most certain way for the advancement of Cuban women along the road of their own liberation; we will overcome all these objective difficulties sooner or later.

There are others that weren't mentioned, at least in the discussion at the congress, such as questions relating to laundries, etc., etc. But we will go on solving these material

difficulties.

And now there remain the other difficulties we mentioned before: those of a subjective character. And what are those subjective difficulties? The problem of an old culture, of old habits, of old concepts, of old prejudices.

There are administrators, for example, who, whenever they can, will give a job to a man rather than to a woman, for a number of reasons: because they begin to think of problems of job slotting, of problems of maternity, of the difficulties of absenteeism a woman may have. The reasons, the factors, are many; but the fact is that women are discriminated against in terms of job opportunities.

One day, Resolution 47 was decreed, which froze a number of positions, certain positions, to be filled only by women. Later, that question was analysed in the workers' congress and it was proposed that Resolution 47 be abolished, and at the same time, that Resolution 48, which prohibited women from taking certain jobs, be studied more deeply.

In any case, this problem must be attacked, if not in the form of freezing these jobs — which has raised certain difficulties, because many times the skilled female personnel for the job didn't turn up — at least in job slotting in workplaces, the positions in which women will be given preference must be noted; and in every new industry, every new workplace, these job slots must be noted. And the party, the workers' organisations, the mass organisations, and public administration, in judging the efficiency of those workplaces, must take into account whether the job slottings that give preference to women are really, in effect, occupied by women.

And in every new factory built in any Cuban town, it must now be indicated what work is to be given to women (APPLAUSE) so there will be time enough to proceed with the selection and training of those women.

The rules and policy of the party and of the mass organisations must be careful to maintain and ensure the conditions for women to be incorporated into the work force. First, it is a question of elemental justice; and second, it is an imperative necessity of the revolution, it is a demand of our economic development, because at some point, the male work force will not be enough, it simply will not be enough.

And for that reason it is necessary to wage a consistent battle against that mentality of discriminating against women in their job opportunities.

Here in the congress, you pointed out other types of difficulties women have, related to the home, related to child care, and related to old habits. And you suggested ways to overcome those difficulties.

In the investigation that was made, it was shown that there are attitudes held by men, negative attitudes, and that there are also negative attitudes held by some women,

and that this requires a special educational effort.

We believe that this struggle against the discrimination of women, this struggle for women's equality and for women's integration, must be carried out by the whole society. And it is the task of our party, in the first place, and it is the task of our educational institutions and of all our mass organisations.

We were very pleased by the statements made here in the name of your youth, and how they committed themselves to wage the battle to overcome prejudices and the mentality that still exists. Perhaps these subjective factors imply an even greater struggle than the objective elements. Because with the development of our economy, we will overcome the material difficulties and one day we will have all the day-care centres we need, and we will have all the semiboarding schools we need, and all the boarding schools we need, and all the services we need. (APPLAUSE)

But we still have to ask ourselves when we will eradicate the age-old ways of thinking, when we will defeat all those prejudices. Of course, we have no doubt that those prejudices will be defeated. It also seemed very difficult to overcome the concepts on property that existed in our society before the revolution. It was impossible to conceive of life without private property. And today it really isn't possible to conceive of life without socialist ownership of the means of production. (APPLAUSE)

But many habits remain from the times when women were also property within society. And these ways of thinking have to be eradicated. And we understand that the Family Code itself, which has produced so much discussion, is an important legal and educational tool in helping to overcome those habits and those prejudices.

But in order to achieve those objectives women and men must struggle together, women and men have to become seriously and profoundly aware of the problem. They have to wage that battle together. And we are certain that it will be waged and that it will be won! And we believe that you are also certain of that! (APPLAUSE) And the agreements of this congress will be magnificent tools in that struggle.

I believe that all the resolutions are very worthy and very important. The resolution on the working woman, on the young woman, the peasant woman, the housewife, and the role of the FMC, the role of the family in socialism; the special resolution on the participation of women in physical education, recreation, and sports; the resolution on International Women's Year, on solidarity, and the inspired appeal to Cuban, Latin American, and all women of the world, in solidarity with Chile—all these resolutions are resolutions worthy of this congress.

And we believe that all these documents must be taken up and studied. And studied not only by the federation, but also by the other mass organisations and by the party. (APPLAUSE) Because these resolutions represent a real program of work for

this historical struggle, for this historical battle you have before you in order to fulfill this revolutionary duty.

One of the things that our revolution will be judged by in the future years is how we have solved women's problems in our society and in our homeland, (APPLAUSE) even though that is one of the revolution's problems that demands more tenacity, more firmness, more constancy, and more effort.

On the question of prejudice, we told you once what happened in the Sierra Maestra when we began to organise the Mariana Grajales Platoon, and the real resistance we encountered to the idea of arming that women's unit, which reminds us how much more backward we were a few years ago. Some men believed that women weren't capable of fighting.

But the unit was organised, and the women fought excellently, with all the bravery that the most valiant of our soldiers could have shown.

Nor was that the first time in history that this occurred. In the underground struggle women carried out an infinite number of tasks that, on occasion, placed them in greater danger than the dangers on the front line. And during World War II, during the fascist aggression against the Soviet Union, thousands of women fought in anti-aircraft units, in fighter and bomber planes, and even with the guerrillas and at the front. But still the old prejudices seek to impose themselves.

Nature made woman physically weaker than man, but it did not make her morally and intellectually inferior to man. (APPLAUSE) And human society has the duty to prevent this difference in physical strength from becoming a cause for discrimination against women. This is precisely the duty of human society: to establish the norms of coexistence and justice for all.

Of course, the exploiting societies, the class societies, exploit women, discriminate against them, and make them victims of the system. Socialist society must eradicate every form of discrimination against women and every form of injustice and discrimination. (APPLAUSE)

But women also have other functions in society. Women are nature's workshop where life is formed. They are the creators par excellence of the human being. And I say this because, instead of being the object of discrimination and inequality, women deserve special consideration from society.

I mention this point because there is something that we must bear very much in mind: that the struggle for women's security and full integration into society must never be converted into lack of consideration for women: it never means the loss of habits of respect that every woman deserves. (APPLAUSE) Because there are some who confuse equality with rudeness. (APPLAUSE)

And if women are physically weaker, if women must be mothers, if on top of their social obligations, if on top of their work, they carry the weight of reproduction and child-bearing, of giving birth to every human being who enters the world, (APPLAUSE) and if they bear the physical and biological sacrifices that those functions bring with them, it is just that women should be given all the respect and all the consideration they deserve in society. (APPLAUSE)

If there is to be any privilege in human society, if there is to be any inequality in human society, there must be certain small privileges and certain small inequalities in favor of women. (APPLAUSE)

And I say this clearly and frankly, because there are some men who believe they're not obliged to give their seat on the bus to a pregnant woman, (APPLAUSE) or to an old woman, or to a little girl, or to a woman of any age who gets on the bus. (APPLAUSE) Just as I also understand it to be the obligation of any youth to give his seat on the bus to an old man. (APPLAUSE)

It is a question of the basic obligation we have toward others: on a bus, in productive work, on the truck, others always have to be given special consideration, for one reason or another.

It is true with women and must be so with women because they are physically weaker and because they have tasks and functions and human responsibilities that man does not have. (APPLAUSE)

For this reason we appeal to our teachers, we appeal to our parents, we appeal to our youth organisations and our Pioneers to give special attention to this standard of conduct in children, to this standard of conduct in our youth.

Because it would be very sad if, with the revolution, there wasn't even the recollection of what certain men in bourgeois society did out of bourgeois or feudal chivalry. And instead of bourgeois and feudal chivalry, there must exist proletarian manners and proletarian consideration of women! (APPLAUSE)

And I say this with the certainty that the people understand it and share it, with the certainty that every mother and every father would like their son to be a chivalrous proletarian, (APPLAUSE) that type of man who is respectful of women and considerate of women, capable of making a small sacrifice that dishonours no man but on the contrary exalts and elevates him. (APPLAUSE)

And here, at the closing of this congress, in which the question of the struggle for women's equality and integration has become the centre of Cuban women's political and revolutionary activity for future years, (APPLAUSE) I say this so that one thing isn't confused with the other. I am saying what I really feel.

And we constantly run up against even verbal, linguistic forms of discrimination

against women. The comrade who spoke here in the name of the workers, Agapito Figueroa, spoke of the discriminatory terminology used. And we must be careful even about this. Because sometimes we use a slogan that seems very pretty, that says: "Woman must be man's comrade"; but one might also say: "Man must be woman's comrade." (APPLAUSE)

There is the linguistic habit of always making the man the centre and this is inequality, it reflects habits of thinking, although language is the least important in the final analysis, words are the least important. There are times when words remind us of something in the past although they no longer have that meaning. Deeds are what are really important!

Many things about this congress have impressed us. As always, first of all, the enthusiasm, the joy, the interest you have shown; but very especially the political level this congress reflected, because this congress expressed the political development of Cuban women. The cadres that are rising in the Cuban women's movement impressed us; the mental sharpness, the depth, the security, and the conviction that the delegates to this congress reflected.

I know our guests were impressed because they saw the minister in discussions with you here and you in discussions with the minister; they were impressed by the great frankness, the great naturalness, the great spontaneity with which the debates evolved. And, all this, of course, in a very disciplined atmosphere.

We weren't really so impressed by those things because we are all accustomed to this, and there's nothing extraordinary in the fact that the minister or anyone else discusses matters with you, or discuss them in a student assembly or a workers' assembly or anywhere else; he discusses with the masses and, if necessary, gives the masses a thousand and one explanations. (APPLAUSE)

The revolution's force lies in this proximity, in this identification between the masses and the government, between the masses and the state, between the masses and authority. This is what gives the revolution an invincible force, because the masses see in everything-in the state, in the government — something that is theirs; not someone else's, not a foreign thing or a strange thing. And no leader can view positions, functions, authority as his own. (APPLAUSE) But in any case it has been highly flattering for us to see how our guests have commented about the form and character of the congress.

For me, the advances Cuban women have made are what impressed me, especially their present political culture and the values that are developing among the masses. It pleased me-and I am sure other comrades too-to see the magnificent leadership that has developed, the magnificent cadres directing this movement headed by Comrade

Vilma Espin, (APPLAUSE) the very worthy leaders the organisation has; their experience, their seriousness, their depth, along with their human qualities. And to see that in the provinces, in the regions, and in the municipalities, that type of cadre is arising, that type of leader is arising. And to see that the working masses sent such magnificent and brilliant delegates to this congress. (APPLAUSE)

We are gratified to see the force the revolution has in women; (APPLAUSE) we are gratified to confirm the revolutionary quality of Cuban women, (APPLAUSE) their self-sacrifice, discipline, and enthusiasm, their passion for the revolution, for just ideas, for the just cause of Cuban women, demonstrating their virtues which-as we have said on other occasions-are virtues demanded of the revolutionary militant and that women have to a very high degree. (APPLAUSE) And so we believe that our party must draw more from that force, (APPLAUSE) that our state must draw more from that force, (APPLAUSE) that our apparatus of production must draw more from that force. (APPLAUSE)

The revolution has in Cuban women today a true army, (APPLAUSE) an impressive political force. (APPLAUSE) And that is why we say that the revolution is simply invincible. (APPLAUSE) Because when women acquire that level of political culture and revolutionary militancy it means that the country has made a very great political leap, that our people have developed extraordinarily, that our country's march toward the future can't be stopped by anyone. That things will only be better all the time, that things will only be superior all the time. And that is why the revolution is so strong; because of its mass organisations, because of the people's political consciousness, and because of its vanguard party. (APPLAUSE)

And every year that passes will be better. Every year that passes we will have a more educated, more aware, more revolutionary, and more internationalist people. (APPLAUSE)

So these are the impressions we take from this historical congress.

We think that you are also happy. (*Exclamations of "Yes!"*) that you are also satisfied, (*Exclamations of "Yes!"*) that you are proud of the congress. (*Exclamations of "Yes!"*) I can tell you that our party is also proud of the congress, is satisfied with the congress. (APPLAUSE & SINGING)

Sometimes you say that you have learned from us, but the reality is that we have learned much more from *you*, (APPLAUSE) we have learned much more from the people, from the masses. Because they always renew and fortify our confidence, our faith, our revolutionary enthusiasm. You help to educate us, and when I say us, I speak not only as leader of the party, I also speak as a man. (APPLAUSE & SLOGANS) You help us all, all men, all revolutionaries, to have a clearer awareness of these problems.

And you help the party and you help the leaders of the revolution: a party in which there is a very high percentage of men in the leadership, (LAUGHTER) a government in which there is a very high percentage of men, so that it might seem to be a party of men and a state of men and a government of men. (LAUGHTER) The day has to come when we have a party of men and women, (APPLAUSE) and a leadership of men and women, and a state of men and women, and a government of men and women. (APPLAUSE) And I believe that all the comrades are aware that this is a necessity of the revolution, of society, and of history.

The great contemporary revolutionaries-Marx, Engels, Lenin-always understood the role of women.

Lenin said, and it has been repeated here several times, that the full victory of the people could not be achieved without the complete liberation of women.

And Marti, the apostle of our independence, had very high ideals and said very beautiful things about women; and not only beautiful but also profound and revolutionary. As when he said that the campaigns of the peoples are weak only when they do not enlist the heart of women; but when women move and help, when women stimulate and applaud, when educated and virtuous women anoint the work with the sweetness of their love, the work is invincible. (APPLAUSE) Or when he said that women's natural nourishment is the extraordinary. Or when he said that women, by instinct, divine the truth and precede it. Or when he stated that women will live as an equal of men, as a comrade, and not at their feet as a pretty toy. (APPLAUSE)

May we be worthy followers of the ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Marti. (APPLAUSE)

I know that your just aspirations and ideals, those of Cuban women, will penetrate deeply into the heart of revolutionaries and the heart of the entire people.

Patria o muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)

6. 'A communist spirit will always be more powerful than money!'

This speech was given by Fidel, then president of the Republic and first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, to close the Deferred Session of the 3rd Congress of the party on December 2, 1986. His speech is concerned with the need for the Rectification Campaign. The text is taken from the *Granma Weekly Review*, December 14, 1986.



Comrades All:

The Congress approved the Program of the Communist Party of Cuba, our first program, and resolved that it be proclaimed today to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the *Granma* landing. I therefore declare the Program of the Communist Party of Cuba approved. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

The unorthodox idea of holding a deferred session of the 3rd Congress turned out to be a practical and wise one. This allowed all our party members and our entire people to analyse and discuss the Draft Program and also to improve it.

Its drafting for the 3rd Congress didn't allow for the time needed for its mass discussion before the congress was held.

The analysis made by our people and our party members resulted in many amendment proposals and many new ideas were introduced which were carefully examined by a commission and, lastly, by the congress commission.

A large number of the thousands of ideas and suggestions submitted were approved — perhaps not thousands but certainly hundreds of them — and even then we had no illusions that our program was perfect; there may be concepts that could be made clearer, more precise, more perfect; yet we are quite certain that the essential ideas were embodied in our program and that it was a good program.

The approval of our first program is a historical event. It is also, of course, a far-

reaching event in the life of our revolution and our party. It expresses our hopes projected toward the future. But we might draft the best program in the world and yet fail to fulfill it.

I am fully convinced that if we fail to rectify our errors and negative trends, neither this program nor anything else worthy of that name could ever be implemented.

We have already fulfilled some programs since our revolutionary ideas emerged, since we started our struggle against the [Batista] dictatorship. The Moncada Program was not only fulfilled — the Moncada Program was fulfilled in a relatively short time during the first years of the revolution — it was amply overfulfilled; what the revolution has done in the past 25 years is much more than what we dreamed of back in those times.

And so it would be nothing new for us to approve a program and fulfill it, yet we must be aware of the requirements of carrying out a program.

Fulfilling the Moncada Program demanded a lot of struggle, effort and sacrifice; yet the requirements were met to carry out that program, to implement it and overfulfill it. That's why it is necessary that we be fully aware of what the premises for implementing this program are, which explains why we have dedicated nearly all the time of our deferred session to the process of rectification of errors and the struggle against negative trends. This program has the added advantage of having been approved now instead of during the first session of the congress — it now contains many of our ideas concerning these problems, this rectification process, and the struggle we are waging; and so our program was brought up to date, and correctly so, in that regard.

Although the essence of a series of problems had already been set forth in the congress and the Main Report, they weren't as broadly outlined as they were later on, during the months after the congress. And, even as we looked into all those questions we discovered many things, many elements and factors that weren't completely clear during the first session of the congress.

Throughout these past months, during the period between the first and this session of the congress, our awareness grew about all these problems and we saw them more clearly. It was realised that, logically, that had to be the main topic of the deferred session. There **was** nothing else we could best work on.

These final sessions of the congress already evidenced, as in the first session, the efforts made for months because it took months to work out the contents of the early session of the 3rd Congress at the meetings held throughout the island, and it also took months for the party to work out the contents of these final sessions of the congress.

The party and the country have gone through a process of discussion. This has

been a year of countless meetings in many different spheres; many plenary meetings dealing with this, plenary meetings of the party at the grass roots and in the provinces; meetings with all the country's enterprises; meetings with all the country's agricultural cooperatives, countless work meetings at the grassroots level. And over the past few weeks plenary meetings were held in all the municipalities to discuss these questions, and then plenary meetings were held in the provinces to make serious, well-thought-out, profound analyses. All of this gradually paved the way for these final sessions.

It is the unanimous opinion of the participants here that this final part of the Congress was not good, it was excellent — some of you were frightened when I said that. (LAUGHTER) It was not just good but magnificent. It has possibly been one of the best political meetings we have ever held in the history of the revolution. (APPLAUSE) We've held good meetings and very good Central Committee plenary meetings and yet I believe that at no time have we reached greater democratic spirit, greater freedom of expression, greater sincerity, greater conviction, openness, clear thinking and, above all, penetrating analysis. Dozens of comrades participated and no doubt hundreds more perhaps were left with the wish to say something; yet I believe that the fundamental things were, in essence, discussed.

Need for rectification

The questions related to the implementation of the economic management and planning system, work organisation and salaries, labour discipline, utilisation of resources, work, style demanding attitude and control were discussed by the party and the Young Communist League (UJC), by the mass organisations and by management; problems relating to cadre policies; ideological problems; social problems; the youth's problems, the peasants' problems. In short, all the subjects pertaining to this policy of rectification and struggle against negative trends were discussed. They involve extremely broad contents that range from rerouting of resources, which so irritate the population, brings so much corruption, so much disorganisation, which is so demoralising, so harmful to the revolutionary process, all the way to the questions related to the chaotic situation regarding salaries linked to amount produced, work norms, fulfillment and overfulfillment of work norms. Then there was the method of using money to solve all problems, the policy of corruption, and even deceiving people. How could anyone pay out easy money which is not really backed by production, by the creation of material values or services! It's simply deceit.

That's why all this is so broad, because it encompasses the whole activity of the revolution and the need for rectification wherever we have made mistakes or wherever negative trends have developed in our revolutionary process.

Our final sessions spent a lot of time on the problem of work organisation and salaries, and the problems of work discipline, making the most of the workday, the temporarily laid-off workers, and all those far-reaching questions for the life of our country and the revolution. A lot of time was also spent on one question of fundamental and decisive importance for our future, namely, a demanding, efficient educational system, and also considerable time was given to the discussions on the method and style of party work.

I wouldn't say, of course, that all our problems were discussed; I'd say that the essential problems were, but not all our problems. That's why we must include, as part of our work during the coming months and as part of our policy, the conclusions and analyses that were previously made throughout the country, in all the municipalities and all the provinces.

That's why we shouldn't just consider the Party Program, we shouldn't bear just that in mind. We must also take into account the summarised versions sent to you of the discussions in the municipalities and the provinces, for it seems to me they are documents of great value. All the problems are analysed there in greater detail: the problems of sharecropping in the countryside, in every municipality, how many sharecropper farms turned up, how many illegal land holdings — which were, in short, the problems being faced by the peasantry; the problems with the youth relating to those aren't studying or working after being offered a chance to work in some of the activities where we needed manpower, above all, in agriculture or construction, reforestation, etc. We have the data on those who accepted and those who didn't.

In those summaries are all the problems systematically discussed throughout the country, and I believe they are documents worthy of being reviewed once in a while, above all when analysing what is being done and how it is being done.

Now the program is something else. The program should not be a reference source, really. The program should be a study manual. I'm not going to mention study groups now; we're pretty grown up from a revolutionary standpoint, and we shouldn't be learning everything in study groups.

What we want the students to do, which is to take into account their textbooks, to go over their lessons and study using their textbooks is what we must do ourselves. We mustn't spend time on millions of study groups but instead individually study the program, read it, reread it, go over it, look for some chapter, look for some point on any subject of interest to us and be really informed as to the contents of the program, because the program is what is going to guide our work for the next 15 or 20 years. I think this is a big task, a big goal, and we must follow that program. Although we wouldn't say it is the best program — I believe anything can be improved — it is

unquestionably a good program.

Now, if we were able to do with this program what we did with the Moncada Program, that is, fulfill it, and not just fulfill it but overfulfill it, this would indeed be a worthy goal, a great overfulfillment, not of a soft norm — as has been the case in some places — but of a strong, difficult program; fulfill it and overfulfill it, and we couldn't over-fulfill it as to its content (it is possible to over-fulfill it as to content), we could still overfulfill it as to time, and no one can yet state how long it would take. Now, if we work well, we can fulfill it and overfulfill it as to time and I am also certain that we can overfulfill it as to content.

Some of the things in the program won't be too difficult, some are already being done. One little point we were discussing, the time it would take us to set up the exact sciences vocational schools, and already these schools have begun to function, the exact sciences vocational schools are already in existence. They opened this school year, although we can't say they are running perfectly for they also have their problems, as does education generally, what with the work load, contents and that sort of difficulties, the test periods, etc., for those schools are very demanding.

The idea of introducing the teaching of computer science in all intermediate education schools — senior high schools, technological institutes, junior high schools — is something being put into practice; it hasn't been introduced in all the schools, but we have purchased an important portion of the equipment and means, I'd say about two-thirds of the necessary means are already in our possession. And we won't have to wait until 1990 for by 1989 the program will be applied in practically all intermediate education schools.

This Party Program talks about the family doctor program. The family doctor has started to become a reality: In City of Havana alone there are about 800 doctors — just in City of Havana! — working in areas which we could say don't have the best living conditions, the best housing. They're working in old working-class neighbourhoods, which aren't indigent neighbourhoods because we don't have any indigent neighbourhoods here and they aren't slums because we don't have any slums. They're working in areas where the population needs them most and they're doing an excellent job.

This year, when more than 1500 joined the program, we've built the doctors' housing as well as their offices. There are already mountain areas completely covered, such as in Granma province, with the notable result that in the mountain areas where there are family doctors the infant mortality rate is down to less than ten per 1000 live births. With this alone and in the mountains, with just a policy of education, the effects can already be seen in just two years. We are avoiding teenage pregnancies, avoiding

accidents in the home, recommending methods of hygiene, with that alone, not counting the other elements the revolution is starting to put into effect, such as the recently opened children's cardiovascular surgery centre, which will save the lives of many small children, and other programs that will be carried out, intensifying the work and raising the quality of maternity hospital services, especially for the first week of life, where we still have a relatively high index of infant mortality. Although the country's general index is now equal to those of some developed countries we know that in regard to the first week of life we have to improve our work and our health services, raise the technical training of the personnel and improve the equipment.

This has occurred in the mountains, even without prenatal genetic wing, which is being extended throughout the country. I think the prospects in this field are really very good, I think it's an area in which we can go beyond the requisite of the Party Program.

If we make a great effort in education and do it well, if we utilise all the human and material resources at our command, if we overcome our difficulties, there's no doubt we can meet the requisites of the program and even go beyond them in education as well. I'm mentioning things that are already being done and that are in the program. We won't take long to complete them.

We can advance so much in the development of cooperatives, for instance, in the countryside; in the development of agricultural production; in the use of technology, in our scientific research centres; the fabulous things that can be done if we put ourselves to the task, the things we can do in production and the services in general, if we overcome all these problems we have been discussing here.

All of you, the delegates who have been present here and the public in general, know the content of these debates. I'm not going to repeat or enumerate everything that was said, every one of the conclusions we have reached, because our people have been keeping up with the debates at the congress sessions. I have no idea what has been broadcast on television and radio; a little while ago I was watching television for a minute, the 8 o'clock news, and I saw part of the report on the Congress. Right now I don't know all of what's came out on television. I haven't had time to find out what's been broadcast but I do know, from what I've heard that it's been covered in depth. There are probably very few things that have not been reported on television and radio, although there are always some things that must stay within the family, that shouldn't be widely publicised so as not to give information to the enemy. But the public has been given a maximum of information on the subjects discussed.

Something else and very significant: about 200 Cuban journalists took part in the debates along with almost 2000 delegates who include the main cadres of the party,

and also the Young Communist League, the mass organisations, the main cadres of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior, the main cadres of the socialist state, all of whom were elected as delegates to the 3rd Congress. And I'm sure that very few have ceased to function in those positions in the period from the first session of the congress until this session.

Matters were discussed with great clarity, as I said before, with great frankness and for that reason it's not necessary to repeat all these issues.

I think we must get to the heart of things. There are two, three, four or five clear fundamental things that can be taken out of this congress, much more than in the first session.

It's so important to have a party

There is a fundamental issue, and it's that we have a party. That is very clear, that we have a party. It's so important to have a party!

Today is the 30th anniversary of the *Granma* landing. Some years before that, when we started the revolutionary armed struggle we didn't have a party. We had a small contingent of men, there was a political organisation and we had clear ideas but we started the struggle with just the embryo of a party. At the time of the *Granma* landing there was a movement and we eventually had a large movement, but not what could properly be called a party, in the true sense of the word.

At the beginning of the revolution we had the Rebel Army, which as Raúl recalled today I had described as a "unifying factor for all the people".

We all know how the party, this new party, the Communist Party of Cuba, was created, how it was built up, how unity among the various revolutionary forces emerged, how it evolved, overcoming difficult obstacles, errors even, like those that surfaced initially and were analysed, discussed and overcome in due time; how it was built up slowly and carefully, selecting the best workers in the country, the best fighters. We were just a handful in the first years of the revolution.

The party devoted a great deal of time to its own creation, its own development, its own growth, its own internal affairs, its own ideological training. It was also being built, gaining experience in its active participation in these almost 28 years of selfless and heroic revolutionary struggle.

Of course, right from the time the party was founded it was present in everything but it still had a modest educational level. It had a great patriotic consciousness, a great revolutionary spirit, but not a great political education — although our members, from the very moment we started moving down the path of socialism, had what could be called a revolutionary consciousness. They knew what they wanted despite the fact

that they were not equipped with many ideas or knowledge. That was the task of ideological education, the work of the revolutionary schools, the work of our press, the work of our mass media, which simultaneously educated the party and the people.

It's really very gratifying and encouraging to see that today we have a party with a large number of members, with experience, a high educational level, a broad political education, a political awareness and a high revolutionary consciousness, a party that knows what it wants and is really learning how to achieve what it wants. This emanates very clearly from what we have seen in these days.

The Party now has more than half a million members and candidate members. Half a million! Imagine, half a million! Now can we compare that figure to what we had during the days of the attack on the Moncada Garrison? We were just a few hundred comrades and we already thought we could carry out a program, make a revolution, bring the revolution to power, overturn the dictatorship and carry out a revolutionary program. There are now about 3500 Communist Party members for every one of those who took part in the Moncada attack — 3500! Plus another 3500 Young Communists and in addition millions of workers, Committees for the Defence of the Revolution members, women, peasants, students. It is really a colossal force.

At that time we didn't even have a modest radio station to spread our ideas. Maybe we would have had it after taking over the garrison: we surely would have had it, because it was planned. There was no newspaper. Today we have modern mass media, scores of publications, several important national newspapers, provincial newspapers, magazines of all kinds, powerful television channels and radio stations, the whole educational system in the country, all the resources to spread ideas. Its so important to spread ideas! We saw very clearly that if we could not spread ideas and if the masses did not adopt those ideas the struggle was impossible, victory was impossible. We always saw that the masses were the basic factor in the revolutionary struggle, the great force that makes history, and that if do masses were exposed to those ideas nothing could stop our victory.

So what did we have at the time of that first program and what do we have today? Immense, tremendous, extraordinary resources and half a million communists! At that time there was maybe one of us for every 50 000 citizens; now there is a communist for every 20 citizens, including new-born babies. Today there is a Young Communist League member for every six or seven young people, depending on the ages as a point of reference, and the masses are members of our trade unions, our Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, all our mass organisations, under the party's leadership. Under the party's leadership! They are not under the leadership of the state; they are under the leadership of the party, because the Leninist idea of the role of the party in

a revolutionary process is becoming clearer and clearer.

That's what having half a million party members means. And as I said during the sessions, it's a healthy party, a very healthy party, even though some members have made mistakes, a party with a high morality, a party of honest people. There may be a dishonest party member unworthy of membership in our ranks that we haven't yet discovered, but the party, its members and its cadres are very moral and humane.

We have reacted in time

It was starting to go to pot, but we have reacted in time so that the party members will not be corrupted, the party will not be corrupted, the people will not be corrupted, the young people will not be corrupted and above all our working class will not be corrupted. (APPLAUSE) I'm not falling into wishful thinking; I'm expressing what we have been seeing in this rectification process.

The peasants were also getting corrupted. We no longer knew if a cooperative was an agricultural production cooperative, an arts and crafts cooperative, an industrial cooperative, a commercial cooperative or a middlemen's cooperative. We were losing our sense of order: the trading between the cooperatives and state enterprises, state enterprises exchanging products, materials, foodstuffs among themselves, like the case Raúl mentioned yesterday of a factory exchanging products with a farm, because while it sent the agricultural cooperative cement sweepings, the agricultural enterprise sent salted meat and who knows what else to the cement factory.

If everyone started to do that, if that proliferated, nothing would be left. There wouldn't be any meat for the schools, for the hospitals, for what has to be distributed to the population every day, every week, every month. If this kind of generalised trading developed among the state enterprises or between the agricultural production cooperatives and state enterprises, no one knows where this would all end, in what kind of chaos and anarchy. These are evident negative tendencies, extremely evident!

We offered examples of enterprises that sold their materials and charged the prices of finished jobs, be it paint, lumber, asbestos tiles or anything else, to cite a few examples, for there are a ton of them. Enterprises that tried to become profitable by theft, swindles, swindling one another. What kind of socialism were we going to build along those lines? What kind of ideology was that? And I want to know whether these methods weren't leading us to a system worse than capitalism, instead of leading us toward socialism and communism. That almost universal chaos in which anyone grabbed anything he could, whether it be a crane or a truck. These things were becoming habitual and generalised.

If this is not combated energetically the masses start to get sceptical, discouraged

and demoralised, and the ideas and objectives of our revolutionary process become discredited. This is serious, very serious.

We talked a lot about this subject and it's a subject on which a lot can be said, essential concepts about what socialism is and how it can be built.

In our meeting with journalists at their last congress, I raised some of these problems, which are not only important for our country but for the whole of international revolutionary thought. Our party has explained with great frankness and courage the errors it has committed and how it happened; how at a given time we made errors along the lines of being extremist, so to speak, or being idealistic. And then we began to make worse mistakes, much worse, with more negative consequences, for the first kind were reversible but the kind of errors I've been referring to could have reached the point of being irreversible. We had to rectify them in time, not only for the sake of our own process but also for the revolutionary process in general, since the construction of a new society, the construction of socialism, the road to communism is completely new to humanity; it's a new experience, a very recent one that must constantly be enriched: by both theory and practice.

No one can imagine that it's all said and done, that all the problems were solved 150, 160 or more years ago, when the Communist Manifesto or the Gotha Program were made known, or Marx and Engels' books or Lenin's later on. It would be antidialectical to think that, it would be anti-Marxist to think that.

Humanity and society follow their course, and more and more new problems crop up. There are problems in this day and age that didn't exist then. At that time, for example, it seemed as though natural resources were unlimited, infinite, and that it was the social regime only that was the obstacle to the unlimited development of the productive forces and social-wealth, especially material wealth.

Of course, there is a lot of truth in the great faith the founders of scientific socialism had in the possibilities of science and in the possibilities for development of the productive forces through the application of science. They realised that over 150 years ago and now the socialist countries are beginning to see it very clearly. In the socialist countries there is a lot of activity surrounding the issue of scientific and technical development, for this is an indispensable prerequisite of the development of the productive forces.

Nowadays there are new problems, pollution for example, which is a reality and an enormous problem. There has also been an incredible amount of waste of nonrenewable natural resources, oil for example.

It is possible that in the briefspan of 150 years man may exhaust all the hydrocarbons that accumulated over hundreds of millions of years.

A proven fact is that throughout Its history, humanity has engaged in all kinds of insane, abusive, unjust, cruel acts and wars, and this is especially true of man raised in the selfishness of class society. That is a fact proven over and over again. Man has unleashed world wars that have meant tens of millions of deaths; right now he is on the threshold of a war that may mean the end of all living creatures.

Man has also committed all sorts of outrages with natural resources — apart from the fact that they are unequally distributed, for nature gave some many riches in the soil, hydrocarbons and minerals, and others got practically nothing in the historical partition of the planet. Moreover, terrible situations of poverty and underdevelopment were created; we know about them from our ties with the Third World; we have thought about them, it's what we see in entire regions where thousands of millions of people live whose future is yet to be decided.

There are new problems, I repeat, enormous problems in this day and age, and it's up to the revolutionary, progressive parties and Marxist-Leninist theory to pinpoint, elucidate and solve them. Some ideas have to be enriched by interpreting Marxism-Leninism correctly. All this is closely related to the construction of socialism.

We should point out that Lenin made a great contribution when he conceived of the possibility of building socialism in an economically backward country, in a country that wasn't an industrial power — the old empire of the tsars. There was a time in revolutionary thinking when it was felt that revolution was only possible if it first occurred in the most industrialised countries and, what's more, in several industrialised countries at the same time. One of Lenin's great historical merits was to have thought of the possibility that socialism could be built even in an industrially backward country.

Of course, the construction of the first socialist state in such conditions took its toll in enormous, terrible sacrifice; in isolation and a blockade; in the need to develop and reinvent science and technology. It meant building a socialist regime with just its own resources, the lone resources of an industrially backward country which, moreover, was in ruins. This was a historical feat, one of humanity's greatest ever, although the consequences are still felt to some extent.

After that, socialism continued to develop. Socialist processes were victorious in other industrially backward countries in Europe and later on in the Third World. Of course, by then a Marxist-Leninist idea of tremendous scope was being practiced: internationalism. It was internationalism that made possible the phenomenon of a socialist revolution 90 miles away from the most industrialised and powerful imperialist country in the world.

In Marx's times imperialism didn't even exist. Imperialism is a new phenomenon which Lenin researched and analysed to guide the revolutionary struggle under the

new conditions. And this is what it's all about, we have many new problems to solve and many obstacles to overcome because this experience is very new and socialism is being built on a trial-and-error basis, so to speak. Yet some concepts are very important.

I believe that one of the worst things that happened to us here — I've said this before and perhaps I'll say it again more than once — is that we began to go off course; perhaps others have done it too, but I've, seen the example of what was happening to us: the blind belief — or it began to be blind — that the construction of socialism is basically a question of mechanisms. As I pointed out at the journalists' meeting, I think that the construction of socialism and communism is essentially a political task and a revolutionary task, it must be, fundamentally the fruit of the development of an awareness and educating people for socialism and communism. (APPLAUSE)

Auxiliary instruments of political & revolutionary work

This does not deny the usefulness and value of certain mechanisms, even economic mechanisms, yes, economic mechanisms! But to me it's clear that economic mechanisms are an instrument of political work, of revolutionary work, an auxiliary Instrument. I dare say that economic mechanisms are auxiliary means, auxiliary instruments of political and revolutionary work but not the fundamental way of building socialism and communism. I haven't the slightest doubt that the fundamental way is through political and revolutionary work.

We've lived through the experience — we've lived through two experiences, the one before and now this one, the two of them; we've seen the negative consequences of both of them and we could see even some positive things in both.

We've harboured two types of illusions. When the Constitution was enacted the country's political-administrative division was carried out and the People's Power organs were set up, which was a great advance, unquestionably. But then the naive belief came about that following these changes, these steps forward, the state was going to function perfectly, almost automatically. Later we started, to realise that this called for a very important political work, an immense task for the party.

On the other hand, in the sphere of material sphere production material and the services, particularly in the sphere of material production, we started believing that everything would run perfectly with the economic management and planning system, with the system of salary linked to amount produced, a panacea that would almost build socialism by itself.

This also partly explains the confusion in the party. Only such rather blind belief in mechanisms, such a lack of understanding of the idea that the construction of socialism and of communism is fundamentally a political and revolutionary task would explain

(it wouldn't explain everything but would explain it in a certain way or in part) that many party members and cadres did not detect the phenomena we are now tackling. Although I am also certain that many party members firmly believed that it had to be that way and that it was correct, it was part of the economic management system given their trust and sense of discipline and because the basic decisions in the economic sphere were taken at a congress and because these decisions stemmed from party leadership.

No leader, no cadre in this country had ever had any of these experiences in building socialism, and the knowledge that some of them had, was, in any case, theoretical and, we might even say, too theoretical. No one here had real practical experience in the conditions of a country like ours, with our degree of development and our specific problems. No one knew nor was in a position to know how those mechanisms were going to function and this is why we have learned the lesson only now.

Dressing up administrators as capitalists

That is what was happening. How were we going to solve our problems of material production and the country's development? Apparently, we thought that by dressing a person up as a capitalist we were going to achieve efficient production in the factory and so after a fashion we started to play at being capitalists. Because it is only under socialism that you could dress up an administrator as a capitalist. If you wanted to make a capitalist out of him, you'd have to make him the owner of the factory and nothing else, return to the capitalist system, find a superefficient street vendor and make him the owner of the place.

Under the conditions of socialism, the only thing possible is to dress an administrator up as a capitalist, the only thing that can be done is dress him up and then believe that he's going to be efficient. And the characters dressed up as capitalists, many of our comrades dressed up as capitalists, began to act like capitalists, but without the capitalists' efficiency. Capitalists take better care of their factories and take better care of their money; they are always competing with other capitalists. If they turn out trash no one will buy it, and if they are not profitable they go bankrupt, they're sued and deprived of their property; they lose their jobs as administrators and stop being the owners.

So some thought that by dressing up a person as a capitalist he was going to make the factory run efficiently. What they actually succeeded in doing in many instances with such absurd beliefs was having these comrades start acting as capitalists, not by reducing production costs as capitalists do, not by turning out better quality products

as capitalists do, for if they don't they go bankrupt, if they can't sell, they're stuck with the merchandise. They didn't seek better work organisation; full use of the workday with discipline and a demanding attitude. Capitalists who manage to survive the competition are demanding, very demanding, or else they don't survive.

Our man dressed up as a capitalist produced anything and forgot about quality: If he had to produce 1000 items, he did; he didn't solve the contradiction between quantity and quality, nor did he keep good checks on quality, nor did he care about it, he just cared about fulfilling his production plan. He began to sell at higher prices, he began to steal to have the factory be profitable and in the end he didn't even care whether the enterprise or factory was profitable, for the state would come forward at the end of the year and shoulder the deficit. What were the problems facing our man dressed up as a capitalist? He could spend his entire life playing the role of a capitalist without achieving efficiency or else making shady deals and being paternalistic, solving individual peoples problems here and there.

I'm not saying everyone behaved like that since that would be unfair.

I'm pointing out the problem, which was becoming quite generalised and on the way to being much more so because we had gotten used to living with those problems and not seeing them.

Naturally, the problem of unprofitability was rather generalised so wholesale prices of many products were raised and even this failed to make many enterprises profitable; I repeat that even raising wholesale prices failed to make many enterprises profitable! Generally speaking, they became increasingly unprofitable. The larger the salaries paid in that chaos of norms and more norms, bonuses and more bonuses, these administrators dressed up as capitalists could even start to compete among themselves to see who got the best workers, paid the best salaries, was less demanding and also played the role of populists, paternalists, what have you, making absolutely no demands, with all the consequences derived from this.

Our man dressed up as a capitalist could not solve those problems because it isn't capitalism or the capitalist methods that under the conditions of socialism can bring about efficiency in an enterprise. This doesn't mean we're giving up these mechanisms, no! We shouldn't give up the system of paying salaries according to amount produced in the field of material production since it is impossible to do so in other fields — I've mentioned this before — it would be absurd. We can't give up paying salaries according to amount produced, work norms or the socialist formula of getting paid according to quantity and quality of work — quantity and quality! (APPLAUSE) We shouldn't give up the idea of enterprise profitability or cost accounting. I'm not against any of those mechanisms or categories, provided we fully understand what political work,

revolutionary work is, the sense of responsibility instilled in cadres, the sense of responsibility of cadres, what can make efficiency possible, not dressing up our administrative cadres in the material production sphere as capitalists. (APPLAUSE)

Yes, we must look for profitability but look for it seriously by means of in-depth exhaustive discussions wherever there's no profitability and why it is so; look for it not by some enterprises swindling or stealing from others, as I said before, but by really cutting production costs, increasing productivity, making the most of the workday, using our know-how, organising the work efficiently, deflating payrolls — none of which can be done in a day, of course. As we said here, in no case and under no circumstances can the remedy be worse than the illness, either when it comes to material production or education, where we're bent on solving the problem; but we were running the risk of using remedies worse than the illness; we must cure our illnesses with appropriate remedies.

Yes, we have inflated payrolls, that's one of the negative trends, and this is an old thing; it's not new, but it's possible that they became more inflated with all the confusion and mistaken concepts.

We must cut costs, we must achieve quality. Actually, we are not going to have our socialist enterprises competing with each other, because that has nothing to do with the idea and conception of socialism; it has nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism. They can emulate with each other but that's not competition in capitalist fashion, with its dramatic consequences.

When there's no competition, if the motivation prompting the owner in a capitalist society to defend his personal interests is out of the question, what is there to substitute for this? Only the cadres, individual people's sense of responsibility, not just the collective's sense of responsibility, the role played by the cadres. The man who is in charge there must be a communist. It is unquestionable that being a member of the party, or not being one, the man who is in charge must be a responsible man, must truly be a communist, a communist! A revolutionary. (APPLAUSE) And not a communist playing at capitalism, a communist dressed up as a capitalist or, mark you, a capitalist dressed up as a communist. (APPLAUSE)

We have achieved success in other activities thanks to good political work, excellent things we have done, and so I ask myself, in the first place, the following: What economic mechanisms, what cost accounting will we use in such an important, decisive field as public health services? What cost accounting, what incentives and what economic categories led us to develop a hospital like the Hermanos Ameijeiras Hospital? What cost accounting led us to introduce science and technology there? What cost accounting enabled us to perform our successful heart transplants in that hospital and made

possible all the major scientific advances it has achieved? Where is the hospital's profitability and the mechanism of profitability and where is the hospital's system for linking salary to amount produced?

As we said during the congress — I don't know whether that was shown on television; at this time I don't know what the people know of what we have been discussing or the questions raised here — were we to remunerate a surgeon according to the number of operations he performed, if we continued along the road we chose in the material production sphere, we would be paving the way for a surgeon to perform 20 operations a day, any type of operation, even if the patient didn't need it, and it wouldn't be important whether the person died or not ... unless we threw in a bonus for saving the guy, (LAUGHTER) a bonus if the person didn't die; 20 operations, a lot of operations; or in case the surgeon had to operate once or twice a day, to do it right and not try to do in one hour what should take three, lest he cut the patient's veins or nerves, or kill him.

What system for linking salary to amount produced could we ever establish in this, what similar system could we establish in the case of the family doctor? For the family doctor must see his patients in the morning, visit them in the afternoon, he's got to sit down in his office, write up case histories, analyse, meditate. Were we to have doctors on this system, what would be the polyclinic's profitability?

There are extremely important spheres in social life and revolutionary work in which none of these mechanisms can possibly be used, so then, how are we to solve such essential services as public health, which have had such excellent results in our country like, for instance, the infant mortality rate. It's possible that this year it'll be less than 14 per 1000 live births, it's possible. And it'll be less in the future. I already explained to you how things were going in municipalities in the mountains which have their own family doctors.

Doctors trained by the revolution

What about the family doctor? Well, that family doctor, in my opinion, gives us a glimpse of the communist man because he works well and works hard, and those in the mountains are young people trained by the revolution; they're not twisted nor are they under a deforming or corrupting system. The residents keep them highly motivated; they're influenced by the local population and are being trained in formulas of communist work.

What we have to do is work with these doctors, and that's just what we do from the time students are chosen to join the Medical Sciences Detachment; they have the approval of their classmates, they are interviewed by a commission to find out whether

they have the vocation and they must make the grade. There are absolutely no exceptions to this procedure.

We must train them from their time as high school students and as university students, work with them and simply turn out communist doctors. I ask you, is there any other way? Is there any other way to turn out doctors with a communist consciousness? Now then, those who do heart surgery, for example, and other very complicated and difficult surgery, what about them? They earn a straight salary as specialists. That's why it was especially painful to see people selling garlic out there at any price, with a hectare of land and working a few hours a year and earning 50,000 or 60,000 pesos a year in the free peasant market what those highly skilled surgeons earn in 12 years.

There were yearly individual incomes — I did the figuring — equal to what it would take surgeons, the best we have in the country, 60 years to earn. I know many good surgeons, many good doctors in this country and I haven't seen any of them with that lust for money. They are dedicated to their work, they are true communists. (APPLAUSE)

The health sector leaves us no alternative but to turn out communists as of now, because there is no other way. Is there any other? Is there any other way?

Exactly the same thing is true in education. How could we possibly link a teacher's wages to the amount produced? We'll pay them according to the number of students passed, and then all the students will get 115% on their exams in every subject. (LAUGHTER) Is there any way to link their wages to what they produce? What about the profitability of the schools, in all those categories, which I admit are necessary, in the sphere of material production?

We have 600,000 or 650,000 workers in education and public health, and what are we doing? In the health sector the party here in the capital is waging a battle. Of course, the Ministry and People's Power are working with the correct criteria but the party and the communists in the hospitals are struggling tirelessly against deficiencies, poor service, all those things the people have been complaining about. And we can see some progress. By the end of the year we have seen progress in the republic's capital as a result of political work, because there is no other way. Political work and a little bit of common sense, reason, sensibility, because in the hospitals beds were being lost, rooms were being lost for lack of maintenance materials. That's a matter of bad planning, of erroneous concepts in the distribution of resources. We said to People's Power in Havana, "How are we going to maintain the hospital without materials? Why don't we allot them two, three, four or even five%, if necessary, of the building materials destined for the general population?" After all, it's for the population's benefit. Of

course, hospitals should be allotted resources apart from this other channel.

So the hospital maintenance personnel began to regain hospital beds and do a heap of other things.

The party is doing a systematic job. The first party secretary of City of Havana province meets with all the secretaries of the party committees in the hospitals, and in the capital there are almost 60 hospitals. This party work is done every month, and it will have to be done for five years, or maybe ten years, depending on how we progress, creating a tradition, a real work tradition and a communist consciousness in those workers: Of course, society will recognise their efforts in terms of pay. There are pay differentials in the hospitals. Nurses' incomes have improved and their abnormal working conditions have been taken into account. Also taken into account is the situation of health aides, who have to work with patients with certain illnesses and do a very hard job, because not all of them have the same working conditions. These things are taken into account. We should see to it that doctors are well paid and can have a decent life. But are we really going to make good doctors by paying them 2000 pesos a month, making them through money? I'd like someone to honestly tell me if that is possible and where it would lead us. Tell me if we have any choice other than political and revolutionary work, from childhood on, from the time they are Pioneers.

Being able to awaken human motivation & morality

Communists must be formed from the time they are Pioneers, from the time they are in daycare centres, to put it plainly. And the socialist state has everything, daycare centres, education, all levels of education, all the way through the university. Can this be done or not? Practical, experience has shown we can, and I've seen many cases of correct political work. Political work isn't reciting a catechism about Marx and Lenin to people every day, but rather being able to awaken human motivation and morality. (APPLAUSE)

To put it graphically, comrades, we must look for the hidden seed that exists in every human being, to coin a phrase from the documentary called *The Hidden Seed*, because every person has it. There can also be a hidden bad seed and if we start cultivating bad seeds we can create monsters.

I don't think anybody was born revolutionary or not. It depends on how you develop the positive traits in every human being. I have seen criminals who are very ashamed to have people know that they are such. Pride is one of the hidden seeds in human beings, almost without exception. We must learn how to develop that pride of all human beings, their honour, their dignity; the finest traits people have. This is clear, in my view.

And in defence, comrades, what economic mechanisms do we use? What profitability can there be in a division, an army, a battalion, a company, a platoon or a squad? What money could we use to pay the young men from compulsory military service who volunteer for internationalist missions? What money could be used as an incentive? What money could we use to pay officers of our Revolutionary Armed Forces who have undertaken three, four or even five internationalist missions? What material incentives could we give them? -

With what money could we pay, what bonus could we give to the men who risk their lives and often do in fact risk or lose their lives? (APPLAUSE) If they work endless hours to assure the defence of the country what bonus could we give them? If they spend years away from their families, what bonus or material incentive could we give, them?

I have seen many comrades in the military laden with awards and medals. What do we have? Communists. What were we obliged to develop in our armed forces, as a result of having a revolution and building socialism 90 miles from the United States? We were obliged to turn out communists, and we have done so! (APPLAUSE) Is there any other formula or mechanism to solve the problem?

If there have been endless hours of preparation for the parade we witnessed this morning with discipline and organisation; if we have organised the entire people, millions of men and women who spend one Sunday a month — a Sunday off every month — on defence, what method have we used, how have we done so? Simply by developing a communist consciousness.

Just imagine what would have happened if we had resorted to other methods in defence and law and order. We would have created alienation and corruption and taught people to think only of money. The officers of the armed forces and the Ministry of the Interior must have a salary in line with the work they do in order to have a decent life. They don't have an egalitarian salary, it is a socialist form of remuneration, depending on their capacity, experience, and work, but is that what has determined their conduct?

Here we have a comrade whom I saw over there, Comrade Leopoldo Cintra, who was in Angola for the second time and, had already been in Ethiopia. He spent several years in Angola as the head of the Cuban military mission, several years! I wonder, what bonus could we give him, what mechanisms could we utilise with him and the many thousands of men like him who have done their duty there? (APPLAUSE)

Then we can safely say that we have achieved our best results working with the pride and honour of people, with their consciousness and instilling ideas. I have mentioned some of the fields in which these mechanisms could not be used although

on the other hand I do feel they are necessary in material production. There are research centres where people work 14 or 15 hours a day and think nothing of it. I'm not advocating that people work 14 or 15 hours a day; I'm simply explaining what the pride and honour of people can do.

Appeal to people's consciousness

We must appeal to people's consciousness, and the other mechanisms, the economic factors, are means or auxiliary tools for political and revolutionary work required by a genuine evolution and, especially; required for the construction of socialism and the path to communism.

The same can be said for party members and cadres of the mass organisations. The best things we have, to tell the truth, have been obtained with political and revolutionary work, through the development of consciousness. These are not illusions, they are examples which are clear to all. And I say realistically, because we must be realistic, that we must use these economic mechanisms in material production, but with this concept; as an auxiliary means or instrument of political and revolutionary work; because believing that these methods will give us the miracle of efficiency and economic and social development, the miracle of socialist construction is one of the most ridiculous illusions there could ever be. (APPLAUSE)

That's where the party's work comes in, that's what became clear, that's what's reflected in the summaries of the municipal and provincial plenums which have been held and the analyses which comrades have presented. In other words we have a strong party and the party has come to grips with the country's problems more than ever before, which is very important. Now it is dealing with many problems it never tackled for years. Now the party is in the centre and vanguard of this battle to rectify errors and combat negative tendencies. All this became clear in the congress sessions.

At this congress session it became clear that the party, knows what it wants and is learning how to accomplish it, and is also using a new work style.

We can't expect this rectification from our administrative cadres dressed up as capitalists. First we must remove the disguise, we must learn how to select and educate them. I don't mean to say we must change all administrative cadres; by no means, for there are many good ones. Many of them are not to blame for having been dressed up as capitalists and the fact that they worked and acted like vulgar capitalists, and some have been deformed.

In this process we must have as many as possible mend their ways, all those susceptible to self-improvement and to adopting a really communist mode of behaviour.

We admit the need for administrative cadres and the use of certain mechanisms. However, careful thought and study should be given to the use of those mechanisms. We have witnessed outright repudiation, more than rejection on the part of the workers when they understood certain types of bonuses that they were being paid. They were repelled and many rejected bonuses of this kind for which they had no justification, they were hair-brained bonuses, (LAUGHTER) unintelligible, incomprehensible, an effort to bribe people and play the role of the good guy,

Capitalists don't do that. They don't give out a bonus which can't be measured in exact and precise terms and which yields profits. But our cadres in capitalist garb were giving out-bonuses all over the place for after all it wasn't their money. (LAUGHTER) It was the bonus of the socialist state and the money of the people which they redistributed at will, creating chaos in wages.

It is clear and it was clear at this congress that the solution to the problems of efficiency, development and the construction of socialism is in the hands of the party. That was very clear! And as I said yesterday, not by managing, not trying to manage but simply by training, guiding and leading men and women; coming to grips with all negative tendencies and errors of any kind; setting an example. That was an issue which was much talked about, the exemplary conduct which a Communist Party member must have. Yes, yes, there's no other way, or otherwise he or she can't be a Communist Party member, can't have that distinguished title. (APPLAUSE)

You know very well that being a communist means sacrifices; you know it better than anyone else. Sacrifices and efforts are always being demanded of you more than of anybody else. This is logical under any circumstances and could not be otherwise; it must be that way.

There are citizens, workers with fine traits who have been honest enough to say, "No. I don't want to join the Party", because they don't want to take on the obligations which party membership implies. This is the first thing we must make party members understand, that they must be ready for anything, be dedicated and self-sacrificing and assume a greater share of duties and responsibilities than other citizens. That is why exemplary conduct is required.

We say a communist worker can't work on his own. But that doesn't mean we will eliminate all categories of independent work where there is a justification for them, where they play a useful role and don't contribute to theft, looting, shady deals, embezzlement, and where they really solve problems they will be maintained. This issue was discussed at the Central Committee plenum and I saw how some municipalities decided to make some exceptions on the idea that party members should not do work on their own. Party members renounced such practices and there

were cases where the party said no because it was a retired person or somebody with a very low income, there was a special situation and the party made allowances for this. These were exceptions, based on need and justice.

But on principle party members can't be working on their own or be involved in shady deals, private trading or hold selfish positions such as those of which we have been critical, the people with that famous licence which was a sort of guarantee of immunity because they wouldn't go to work, or would break something, doing whatever they could to be sent home on 70% pay so they could earn more money in addition to what they got from the state; or they would leave an important project to earn more money on another, and they would leave a hospital being built with great urgency to go off and make more money on their own.

In this situation we will see who retains the famous licenses, who is really rendering a useful service to society. We must accept, It, for it is a necessity under our circumstances and conditions; but with order, for this was also in complete disarray. Everything here fell prey to disorder, all measures led to some negative trend. It happened with those sent home on 70% pay who have also been discussed here at the congress, and the party has acted to solve the problems.

Clear principles and views repudiating these lay-offs at 70% pay were expressed, but this doesn't mean we will resort to ruthless action that will ignore just concerns; but the limits and conditions must be determined in a country which needs workers in many fields. We will have to solve the problem which led to widespread vice. There is an incredible list of examples showing how this degenerated.

The work of the party can be seen in all of this, where the party gets involved subjective and organisational problems are solved.

Now we are involved in this process of rectification and struggle against negative trends amidst a unique economic situation, as I explained. I won't say it is difficult because that would give the idea it is difficult in all aspects. That's why I said unique, because there are some branches of the economy with complicated and difficult situations, but not all. The country will have all the fuel it needs, for example; it will have many things which are assured by its economic relations with socialist countries. But we will lack things that must be imported from the hard currency area. They will be in short supply, and we do have a complicated situation and there will be problems! This situation can lead to delays in the arrival of raw materials, difficulties with spare parts, there may be shortages of some, others may arrive late, due to our hard currency limitations, which are greater than ever!

At the congress I tried to explain to the comrades — I think some of this was reported in the press — that we would have half the traditional sum for hard currency

expenditures. Imports valued at a minimum of \$1.2 billion previously will be reduced to 600 million dollars. And we will have to get by with that sum and be ready for those difficulties which will unfortunately turn up. There are times when you can't buy until you have the money; and you can only spend what you earn. This also has to do with the foreign debt and related problems about which much has been said that have affected many countries. As I have explained previously, the situation is worse for us this year because of a series of objective factors such as last year's drought and the hurricane. But the work done enabled the damage to sugar production to be reduced to much less than what the drought had caused.

Re-exports of oil which we save, which had reached three million tons, underwent a price cut to less than half of the original price. Less than half!

Another financial and monetary problem associated with the economic blockade came when the dollar was devalued and all other currencies in markets where we buy our imports became more expensive. These three factors led to a drop of more than 40% in our foreign exchange earnings from one year to the next and created serious problems.

Such a small foreign exchange plan with such reduced imports of goods from the hard currency area is unprecedented and we are striving for the best possible use of those resources and seeking to limit the consequences as much as possible, but there will be inevitable consequences. We must see how we cope with the situation without sacrificing our development, maintaining our intensive construction program, for example, of the nuclear power plant, which will mean a fuel savings of \$500 million yearly. That can't be stopped for it means the electricity we will need in the future. It may be that in the future we will be able to use electricity produced in this way in the kitchen, where now we must be using so many different types of fuel and often with difficulties.

This development must continue, construction and enlargement of oil refineries must continue, the development of nickel must go on. All industries which are important for the development of the country must continue under these circumstances and be given priority.

As I told the delegates, investments which reduce imports or generate exports will have absolute priority and we can't stop a single one. How will we get by? With the help of the goods and raw materials we get from the socialist countries and the indispensable minimum, very minimum, which we must necessarily buy from the capitalist world we will draw up a rational plan that does not sacrifice development and attempts to meet the basic needs of health care, education and food.

However, there will be inevitable consequences as a result of this external financial

situation and even because of the quest for a balanced internal financial situation. We talked about this and some measures at the congress, although, of course, this issue will basically have to be dealt with at the coming meeting of the National Assembly, which will consider the yearly plan and where each of the measures we will have to take will be explained.

Impact of drought

In addition to the problems which so greatly affected us this year and gave rise to this situation, what factors threaten us or what factors play a role this year? Well, the drought this year was worse than last. I asked the Academy of Sciences to please gather data on rainfall in the 1981-86 period. It seems we are in a drought without a doubt, for in all those years from 1981 to 1986 the rains have been less than average in those six years and including 1981 and 1986. There have usually been moderate droughts and intense droughts, although rainfall is always greater in some areas than others. In 1985 the drought was moderate to intense but in Havana province: from which agriculture and our capital get their water the rate was far less than average.

Now, about the rain we've had until late October — and we all know it didn't rain in November — despite the rain at a given time in Santiago de Cuba which helped fill some reservoirs, the average rainfall in the country this year was 68% of the average in the past, 68%, and in Havana province it was 66%. In some places like in Holguin it was 52%.

The drought we've had this year is what meteorological experts call very intense drought, that's the name or category given to the drought we've had this year. It affects agricultural production and is forcing Havana province to reduce its cultivated land for lack of irrigation water, in spite of the fact that we finished a canal leading from Mamposton dam to the town of Guira. We finally finished it, yet it doesn't compensate for the consequences of a drought which I believe came to 70% last year and 66% this year. Up to October this was the average rainfall in Havana province, thereby affecting not just agriculture but also water supply for the capital. We have serious problems in that connection.

It has been decided to step up as much as possible the work on a new basin and complete it late next year. Yet canals, basins, dams are not much use if it doesn't rain.

I believe it is necessary for the population to be more or less informed about these facts and we mustn't live as if we ignored them.

All this will necessarily affect us. It has already affected our sugar production by over a million tons less, and since we are committed to honouring our obligations to the socialist countries and we no longer do what we did at times before — simply

reducing our sugar deliveries to them so as not to affect our deliveries to the capitalist market — now we won't have much sugar available for the capitalist market in 1987. This is part of the group of factors I have explained and which makes it a tough year in terms foreign exchange, with the added inconvenience that the drought also affects our production of other agricultural produce like milk and root and garden vegetables.

That's why we are waging this battle which all these difficulties of an objective nature make more necessary to win, this being one more reason for us to work better in every sense, in every sense! We must wage a stronger battle against anything implying waste of resources of any kind: fuel, electricity, water, raw materials, what have you.

Above all, we must also be aware of our problems, we must be prepared to deal with them without sacrificing our future. We must do the best we can and be ready to cope with all the restrictions we may well have to face. (APPLAUSE)

We are now studying a series of measures, as I explained to you, and they will be taken. Already in its final stages is what concerns the plan, and the main goal here is doing the best we can with what we have now: a minimum of foreign exchange, making the best use of all resources, relying on the resources coming from the socialist camp, facing up to our difficulties and pushing ahead with development.

Development is the main thing and we are building very important projects.

Now, I must confess to you that having witnessed together with all the comrades from the Party leadership and with all of you here, how the session unfolded, we have good reason to feel encouraged and rather optimistic without pretending that the road will be easy. The road ahead involves difficulties and we must face up to them with a lot of political fortitude and a lot of political and revolutionary awareness. The party will have to play a decisive role in this.

We want the party to continue along the path it has taken and remain at the centre of this battle: we want it to continue gaining experience, for we learn something every day.

As it was explained here, in spite of what I just said, we're going to come up with more stone, more sand, more steel bars, more cement. We are going to launch in 1987 a bigger housing program than in 1986 and we are going to rectify our investment policy ideas and errors. We are going to keep close tabs on all priority projects, because in all these years we hadn't succeeded in having our priority projects — which are those having to do with our weakest point, the Achilles' heel of foreign exchange — be built with priority, and we must give them all the attention they deserve.

We are going to go on doing this, we're going to go on building family doctor offices, another 1500 of them. Next year we will fill the Santiago de Cuba mountains

with family doctors. We will go on with our program to build new hospitals, the most important and urgent ones. We will not despair, nor will we sacrifice our future — neither the economic or social future — although, logically, the main emphasis will be on economic investment; it couldn't be otherwise.

The party will have to follow everything closely; it must be in the centre of all this, and we must enlarge our experience, the experience every one of us gains in facing up to the problems, the difficulties. Every day and everywhere we have the opportunity of learning something new, and judging by what we've seen this year, look at all the problems that are beginning to be solved now!

Just like when I was critical at the first session of the congress, the enemy is listening to what we are saying. If I say we are not making the most of the workday or mention any of these problems, they immediately publicise it. They're interested in discrediting socialism, our interest is giving it prestige. Theirs is heaping trash on it, ours is freeing it of all trash. (APPLAUSE) We must free it of all trash and to do so we mustn't have the slightest fear of showing it for what it is! It's a good thing to wash our dirty linen out in the open. We're doing it and we can count more and more on our revolutionary press. To tell the truth, our press is contributing a lot to this battle, with a great sense of responsibility, great awareness, a great sense of its role and its mission.

And we're airing some of our trash. We still have more, but every day we are airing some of it.

Our enemies are fooling themselves for they may be thinking that we are doing poorly, or that socialism is not advancing. They may harbour illusions of that sort. But if they do, they are not thinking with the right logic, for what's excellent about this battle of ours is that we are clearing away the trash, paving the way for more rapid development of our revolutionary process. The fact is they don't realise that we are guaranteeing our future, that we are guaranteeing victory along the correct path, the correct path! (APPLAUSE) It's good if they're lulled by that, let's hope they're lulled to sleep for a long time for then they will see how the revolution and the party will imposingly reemerge from the dust of the trash. Once the dust settles they will see the revolution marching on, the party marching on, and they will see that we have paved the way for overcoming objective, and subjective obstacles in spite of the difficult conditions under which we have to build socialism: that is, at the doorstep of imperialism and on the basis of truly infamous economic relations such as the developed capitalist countries have with the underdeveloped countries, the Third World countries, in spite of all that. In spite of the miserable prices they pay for our raw materials and our products, while charging us twice, three times, four times more for any object they export to us, even an ice cream machine! Even a little soft ice cream machine which:

sold for 2000 pesos 12 or 14 years ago. Back in 1970 we purchased a few hundred of them which went to factories and a few places run by People's Power. We used to have a little reserve around.

It occurred to me to ask what soft ice cream machines sell for nowadays, and the 2000 peso ones we bought now sell for 8000. So you see and then they go on paying five cents, six cents for sugar in the so-called world market, and so it goes with any raw material, any resource from the Third World countries. A crane which used to sell for 25,000 pesos 14 or 15 years ago now costs 130,000, 140,000. Those are the conditions imposed on the Third World.

In spite of all that and thanks precisely to our status as a socialist country and our relations with the countries of the socialist camp, we will continue to advance. And just imagine the suffering, the poverty that is afflicting other countries that lack the privilege available to us!

Some day our enemy will understand, and see all this, it will eventually realise what we are doing now in this historic moment in 1986. Some day they will realise!

Our problems are new

Our problems are new, they are not the problems we had in 1959. Our problems in education are different. We don't have illiteracy, we don't have a lack of teachers, no. We have problems in education because we've built thousands of schools and we want these schools to function in the best possible manner. We have problems because we have 260,000 teachers and what we want is for these teachers to improve and do the best possible job. We have problems because we have built and expanded many hospitals.

We have problems because we have 25,000 and some doctors — not the 3000 left here by the imperialists but 25,000 and all trained by the revolution — tens of thousands of nurses and health technicians and workers, and what we want is that they do the best possible job. We have problems because we have built thousands of industrial and agricultural facilities; because we have tens of thousands of tractors and pieces of construction equipment, and we want all these resources to be efficiently utilised. We have problems because we are building large projects and we want this to go on at the right pace, with the necessary quality and efficiency. We have problems because we have huge resources compared with what we had in the past and we are waging a battle so that they be used correctly.

If we have a new factory turning out 60 million square meters of cloth, we want that factory to operate with maximum efficiency. And not with the idea of wearing all those clothes but instead exporting them to solve other problems, because we must

first guarantee the supply of medicines and food. If we have another big factory of any type, many machine works which were nonexistent before and many construction materials plants that didn't exist before, we want them to work efficiently and in the best way possible. That's why we want to get rid of this trash and dust.

I spoke at the beginning about when the revolution broke out in the old tsarist empire, how they had to carry out the construction of socialism without help from anybody, depriving themselves of clothes, shoes, food everything, to be able to rebuild the nation, and how later came the fascist aggressors *who* destroyed it all for the second time in less than 30 years. We have had, on the other hand, the privilege — as I explained — of having excellent relations, extraordinary foreign cooperation, satisfactory trade with the socialist countries. We have had many resources available to us and we are to blame for not having known how to use them efficiently, with all the necessary efficiency.

Unquestionably, if we run into problems with an adequate utilisation of the workday in the countryside, if people decide to work without taking breaks so they can leave early, if people only work four or five hours in the fields, that's not the way to build socialism. If in industry, everywhere, we only utilise the workday to 80, 75, 70% capacity, that's not the way to build socialism in a country that still depends to such an extent on agriculture and that must develop its industries in order to free itself from that dependence on agriculture, and that in order to develop its industries has to work with great seriousness and efficiency and must turn out quality products. If we fail to make the most of the workday in sugarcane, in agriculture generally, in construction, in the factories, in lots of other places, that's not the way to build socialism!

We must understand this, it is the first thing we must understand, and it is what we are now learning quite clearly, because never before had we thought as much as we are doing now about this type of problem. Never before have we internalised, as they say now, these problems to such a great extent. The party is aware of that and is coming to grips with it, because all these negative tendencies must be eradicated, we must make people work.

Can't become prosperous without work

It isn't written in any program and no one has ever said anywhere that a country could be developed and could progress and become prosperous without work. And we must learn how to have a dignified concept of work. All our honour and pride must be brought together to raise the value of our work, the importance of our work, and to become conscious of the importance of our work. And we must dedicate ourselves to work. Work as established by law; make the most of the workday and do away with all

those silly things of all kinds that have led to a lack of discipline. We must do away with all those silly things and absurdities we have analysed and harshly criticised. And there's only one way of doing this: political and revolutionary work guided by the party, for the response of the workers everywhere is excellent, as you yourselves have pointed out in all the meetings that have been held and in which so much was said about understanding and support, which with very few exceptions were found everywhere.

There are people who don't understand, people who obviously don't even read the newspapers, or if they do they don't understand what they read, or don't listen to the radio, or haven't had the problems explained to them, because the key lies in :explaining the problems and explaining our realities. If the sun is shining out there you simply can't say: "The sun doesn't exist."

We must do this work of informing and educating our workers and our people. I am convinced that we will succeed in this and following these sessions, this meeting. I am even more convinced, more than ever before! (APPLAUSE) And I'm convinced that we will meet the requisites of this program of the communists and of our people. (APPLAUSE) And not just meet the requisites but go beyond them, as we did with our promises in the Moncada Program, (APPLAUSE) as we did with our promises at the time of the *Granma* expedition, (APPLAUSE) as we did with our promises in the Sierra Maestra. (APPLAUSE)

It is not a question today of tackling problems of illiteracy, a lack of schools, the problems of beggars, starvation. It is not a question of tackling the problems of men and women dying for lack of hospitals, doctors' assistance of any kind. It is not a question of tackling the problems of a bloody dictatorship that oppressed us and tied our hands and feet, that deprived us of freedom, deprived us of bread, sold us out to foreigners. It is not a question of struggling almost without arms, without everything, against a powerful and well-armed enemy, in the face of huge tasks. It is a question of solving and confronting new problems stemming from our progress, our development and the great historical challenges of developing the country, building socialism, advancing along the road to communism, developing revolutionary theory and practice, demonstrating that socialism is not just overwhelmingly superior to capitalism in the fields of education, health care or sports, or other things where they admit we have shown progress but also demonstrating to the capitalists what we socialists, we communists are capable of doing with pride, honour, principles and consciousness: that we are not once, not twice, but ten times more capable than they of solving the problems posed by the development of a country! It is a question of demonstrating that we are more capable than they are of being efficient in material production!

(APPLAUSE) It is a question of demonstrating that a consciousness, a communist spirit, a revolutionary will and vocation were, are and will always be a thousand times more powerful than money!

Patria o Muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)

7. 'Tomorrow will be too late'

In this short June 12, 1992 address to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Fidel described the global environmental crisis and identified its causes more powerfully than any other delegate.



Mr. President of Brazil Fernando Collor de Melo, Mr. UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Your Excellencies:

An important biological species is in danger of disappearing due to the fast and progressive destruction of its natural living conditions: humanity.

We have become aware of this problem when it is almost too late to stop it.

It is necessary to point out that consumer societies are fundamentally responsible for the brutal destruction of the environment. They arose from the old colonial powers and from imperialist policies which in turn engendered the backwardness and poverty which today afflicts the vast majority of mankind.

With only 20% of the world's population, these societies consume two-thirds of the metals and three-fourths of the energy produced in the world. They have poisoned the seas and rivers, polluted the air, weakened and punctured the ozone layer, saturated the atmosphere with gases which are changing weather conditions with a catastrophic effect we are already beginning to experience.

The forests are disappearing. The deserts are expanding. Every year billions of tons of fertile soil end up in the sea. Numerous species are becoming extinct. Population pressures and poverty trigger frenzied efforts to survive even when it is at the expense of the environment. It is not possible to blame the Third World countries for this. Yesterday, they were colonies; today, they are nations exploited and pillaged by an unjust international economic order.

The solution cannot be to prevent the development of those who need it most. The reality is that anything that nowadays contributes to underdevelopment and poverty constitutes a flagrant violation of ecology. Tens of millions of men, women,

and children die every year in the Third World as a result of this, more than in each of the two world wars. Unequal terms of trade, protectionism, and the foreign debt assault the ecology and promote the destruction of the environment.

If we want to save mankind from this self-destruction, we have to better distribute the wealth and technologies available in the world. Less luxury and less waste by a few countries is needed so there is less poverty and less hunger on a large part of the Earth. We do not need any more transferring to the Third World of lifestyles and consumption habits that ruin the environment.

Let human life become more rational. Let us implement a just international economic order. Let us use all the science necessary for pollution-free, sustained development. Let us pay the ecological debt, and not the foreign debt. Let hunger disappear, and not mankind.

Now that the alleged threat of communism has disappeared and there are no longer any more excuses for cold wars, arms races, and military spending, what is blocking the immediate use of these resources to promote the development of the Third World and fight the threat of the ecological destruction of the planet?

Let selfishness end. Let hegemonies end. Let insensitivity, irresponsibility, and deceit end.

Tomorrow it will be too late to do what we should have done a long time ago.

Thank you.

Fidel Lives On In the Struggle

By Dave Holmes

The following speech was given at a Melbourne rally in honour of Fidel on December 4, 2016.



Fidel Castro was a towering figure in world politics for almost six decades. Now, with his passing, the hacks of the capitalist media have been gloating over the death of the “dictator”. Of course, he was nothing of the sort. As he truthfully told director Oliver Stone in the movie *Commandante*, “I am a slave to the people”! His life is a monument of conscience and loyalty to principle.

The January 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution electrified the left around the world, especially in Latin America. With Fidel the acknowledged leader, little Cuba has punched above its weight ever since.

The revolution has transformed Cuba. It has First World social indicators. Its medical system shows what can be done when the capitalist profit motive is eliminated and human need placed at the centre of government policy.

‘Tomorrow will be too late’

For all its problems, Cuba has avoided the horrors that capitalist “development” brings, both of large-scale poverty on the one hand and consumerist madness on the other.

In 2006 the World Wildlife Fund said Cuba was the only sustainable country on the planet. In 1992 Fidel made a stirring address to the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio:

Stop transferring to the Third World lifestyles and consumer habits that ruin the environment. Make human life more rational. Adopt a just international economic order.

Use science to achieve sustainable development without pollution. Pay the

ecological debt. Eradicate hunger and not humanity ...

Enough of selfishness. Enough of schemes of domination. Enough of insensitivity, irresponsibility and deceit. Tomorrow will be too late to do what we should have done a long time ago.

Hurricanes regularly devastate the Caribbean including Cuba but for the all the material damage they do, the death toll in Cuba is always very small, due to a well-rehearsed system of civil defence. Just compare this to the shambolic US response to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.

If humanity is to survive it will have to learn from Cuba's ecological and climate protection measures.

A democratic & humane revolution

Under Fidel's leadership the Cuban Revolution has always been marked by its democratic and humane values. Cuba has had nothing even approximating a Stalin chapter: There have been no show trials and mass repressions, no destruction of people.

One of Fidel's famous speeches is his 1962 address at the University of Havana, "The revolution must be a school of unfettered thought". It is a broadside against narrowness and sectarianism and a call to members of the new revolutionary organisation to adhere to the highest personal standards and reject all privilege and self-seeking.

Bold initiatives at home & abroad

Fidel and Cuba have always been associated with bold initiatives at home and abroad.

- One of the first big projects of the revolution was the 1960 campaign to wipe out illiteracy in Cuba. If the people were to participate in politics in a new way, they had to have the basic skills to do so. 100,000 teenagers were enlisted and sent to the countryside to live with the peasants and teach them to read and write. Illiteracy plunged from 25% to less than 4% within a year.
- Cuba's interventions in Angola — both in 1976 and again in 1987 — played a crucial role in defeating the forces of the South African apartheid state and preventing it from occupying the country. Coupled with the township uprisings at home, South Africa's defeat in Angola convinced its leaders that they had to make a political turn and ditch apartheid if the underlying capitalist economic system was to be preserved.

Several hundred thousand Cuban soldiers served in Angola and over 2000 of them died there. When the mission was over, the Cubans left. They were not after

oil or gold but were simply carrying out their internationalist duty.

- In 1986, the government launched the “Campaign of Rectification of Errors and Negative Tendencies”. It aimed to increase people’s participation in the economy and politics by raising political consciousness rather than using material incentives and bureaucratic directives. The title of one of Fidel’s speeches says it all: “A communist spirit is a thousand times more important than money.”
- Then there was Cuba’s epic of survival in the “Special Period” of the 1990s when the collapse of the Soviet Union removed — almost overnight — most of Cuba’s imports and exports. This would have finished off most other countries but after several very hard years Cuba came through it, thanks to the work of the revolution and Fidel’s inspired leadership.

Cuba’s future

The generation which made the 1959 revolution is inexorably passing from the scene. Fidel has gone and Raul and the others will soon follow. The imperialists hope that Cuba will succumb and capitalism will return.

Cuba undoubtedly faces some very serious problems today. There is a growth of bureaucracy (among which there are surely many would-be Yeltsins); corruption among the officialdom is a big worry; social differentiation among the population is growing (some have dollars and others do not); and significant sections of the youth are disengaged from the revolution. The economic situation has forced the government to rely on mass tourism: This brings in the dollars but also creates serious social problems.

But socialists should not give up on the Cuban revolution. That would be unworthy and certainly would not be in the spirit of Fidel. Cuba needs our solidarity more than ever. Without shutting our eyes to the serious problems, we should continue to spread the word about the achievements of the revolution and refute the slanders of the capitalist lie machine. Cuba shows what can be done and if humanity is to survive, eventually the whole world must take the Cuban road.

Long live the Cuban revolution!

Fidel presente!

Resistance books