

Che Guevara



socialism and man in Cuba and other works





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INDEX

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Socialism and Man in Cuba | 1 |
| Speech Delivered at the Closing Event of the Week of Solidarity with South Viet Nam, on December 20, 1963 | 23 |
| Speech Made at the Afro-Asian Economic Seminar Celebrated in Algeria, in 1965 | 33 |
| Farewell Letter to Fidel | 47 |
| Message to the Peoples of the World through the Tricontinental | 51 |



SOCIALISM
AND MAN
IN CUBA



Dear comrade:

I am finishing these notes while traveling through Africa, moved by the desire to keep my promise, although after some delay. I should like to do so by dealing with the topic that appears in the title. I believe it might be of interest to Uruguayan readers.

It is common to hear how capitalist spokesmen use as an argument in the ideological struggle against socialism the assertion that such a social system or the period of building socialism upon which we have embarked, is characterized by the extinction of the individual for the sake of the State. I will make no attempt to refute this assertion on a merely theoretical basis, but will instead establish the facts of the Cuban experience and add commentaries of a general nature. I shall first broadly sketch the history of our revolutionary struggle both before and after taking of power.

As we know, the exact date of the beginning of the revolutionary actions which were to culminate on January 1, 1959, was July 26, 1953. A group of men led by Fidel Castro attacked the Moncada military garrison in the province of Oriente, in the early hours of the morning of that day. The attack was a failure, the failure became a disaster and the survivors were imprisoned, only to begin the revolutionary struggle all over again, once they were amnestied.

During this process, which contained only the first seeds of socialism, man was a basic factor. Man

— individualized, specific, named — was trusted and the triumph or failure of the task entrusted to him depended on his capacity for action.

Then came the stage of guerrilla warfare. It was carried out in two different environments: the people, an as yet unawakened mass that had to be mobilized, and its vanguard, the guerrilla, the thrusting engine of mobilization, the generator of revolutionary awareness and militant enthusiasm. This vanguard was the catalyst which created the subjective condition necessary for victory. The individual was also the basic factor in the guerrilla, in the framework of the gradual proletarianization of our thinking, in the revolution taking place in our habits and in our minds. Each and every one of the Sierra Maestra fighters who achieved a high rank in the revolutionary forces has to his credit a list of noteworthy deeds. It was on the basis of such deeds that they earned their rank.

The First Heroic Stage

It was the first heroic period in which men strove to earn posts of greater responsibility, of greater danger, with the fulfillment of their duty as the only satisfaction. In our revolutionary educational work, we often return to this instructive topic. The man of the future could be glimpsed in the attitude of our fighters.

At other times of our history there have been repetitions of this utter devotion to the revolutionary cause. During the October Crisis and at the time of hurricane Flora, we witnessed deeds of exceptional valor and self-sacrifice carried out by an entire people. One of our fundamental tasks from the ideological standpoint is to find the way to perpetuate such heroic attitudes in everyday life.

The Revolutionary Government was established in 1959 with the participation of several members of the "sell-out" bourgeoisie. The presence of the Rebel Army constituted the guarantee of power as the fundamental factor of strength.

Serious contradictions arose which were solved in the first instance in February, 1959, when Fidel Castro assumed the leadership of the government

in the post of Prime Minister. This process culminated in July of the same year with the resignation of President Urrutia in the face of mass pressure.

With clearly defined features, there now appeared in the history of the Cuban Revolution a personage which will systematically repeat itself: the masses.

Full and Accurate Interpretation of the People's Wishes

This multifacetic being is not, as it is claimed, the sum total of elements of the same category (and moreover, reduced to the same category by the system imposed upon them) and which acts as a tame herd. It is true that the mass follows its leaders, especially Fidel Castro, without hesitation, but the degree to which he has earned such confidence is due precisely to the consummate interpretation of the people's desires and aspirations, and to the sincere struggle to keep the promises made.

The mass participated in the Agrarian Reform and in the difficult undertaking of the management of the State enterprises; it underwent the heroic experience of Playa Girón; it was tempered in the struggle against the groups of bandits armed by the CIA; during the October Crisis it lived one of the most important definitions of modern times and today it continues the work to build socialism.

Looking at things from a superficial standpoint, it might seem that those who speak of the submission of the individual to the State are right; with incomparable enthusiasm and discipline, the mass carries out the tasks set by the government whatever their nature: economic, cultural, defense, sports, etc. The initiative generally comes from Fidel or the high command of the revolution; it is explained to the people, who make it their own. At times, local experiences are taken up by the Party and the government and are thereby generalized, following the same procedure.

However, the State at times makes mistakes. When this occurs, the collective enthusiasm diminishes palpably as a result of a quantitative diminishing that takes place in each of the elements that make

up the collective, and work becomes paralyzed until it finally shrinks to insignificant proportions; this is the time to rectify.

This was what happened in March, 1962, in the presence of the sectarian policy imposed on the Party by Aníbal Escalante.

Dialectical Unity Between Fidel and the Mass

This mechanism is obviously not sufficient to ensure a sequence of sensible measures; what is missing is a more structured relationship with the mass. We must improve this connection in the years to come, but for now, in the case of the initiatives arising on the top levels of government, we are using the almost intuitive method of keeping our ears open to the general reactions in the face of the problems that are posed.

Fidel is a past master at this; his particular mode of integration with the people can only be appreciated by seeing him in action. In the big public meetings, one can observe something like the dialogue of two tuning forks whose vibrations summon forth new vibrations each in the other. Fidel and the mass begin to vibrate in a dialogue of growing intensity which reaches its culminating point in an abrupt ending crowned by our victorious battle cry.

What is hard to understand for anyone who has not lived the revolutionary experience is that close dialectical unity which exists between the individual and the mass, in which both are interrelated, and the mass, as a whole composed of individuals, is in turn interrelated with the leaders.

Under capitalism certain phenomena of this nature can be observed with the appearance on the scene of politicians capable of mobilizing the public, but if it is not an authentic social movement, in which case it is not completely accurate to speak of capitalism, the movement will have the same life span as its promoter or until the rigors of capitalist society put an end to popular illusions. Under capitalism, man is guided by a cold ordinance which is usually beyond his comprehension. The alienated human individual is bound to society as a whole by

an invisible umbilical cord: the law of value. It acts upon all facets of his life, shaping his road and his destiny.

The Invisible Laws of Capitalism

The laws of capitalism, invisible and blind for most people, act upon the individual without his awareness. He sees only the broadness of a horizon that appears infinite. Capitalistic propaganda presents it in just this way, and attempts to use the Rockefeller case (true or not) as a lesson in the prospects for success. The misery that must be accumulated for such an example to arise and the sum total of baseness contributing to the formation of a fortune of such magnitude do not appear in the picture, and the popular forces are not always able to make these concepts clear. (It would be fitting at this point to study how the workers of the imperialist countries gradually lose their international class spirit under the influence of a certain complicity in the exploitation of the dependent countries and how this fact at the same time wears away the militant spirit of the masses within their own national context, but this topic is outside the framework of the present note.)

In any case we can see the obstacle course which may apparently be overcome by an individual with the necessary qualities to arrive at the finish line. The reward is glimpsed in the distance and the road is solitary. Furthermore, it is a race of wolves: he who arrives does so only at the expense of the failure of others.

I shall now attempt to define the individual, the actor in this strange and moving drama that is the building of socialism, in his twofold existence as a unique being and a member of the community.

I believe that the simplest approach is to recognize his unmade quality: he is an unfinished product. The flaws of the past are translated into the present in the individual consciousness and constant efforts must be made to eradicate them. The process is twofold: on the one hand society acts upon the

individual by means of direct and indirect education, while on the other hand, the individual undergoes a conscious phase of self-education.

Compete Fiercely With the Past

The new society in process of formation has to compete very hard with the past. This makes itself felt not only in the individual consciousness, weighed down by the residues of an education and an upbringing systematically oriented towards the isolation of the individual, but also by the very nature of this transition period, with the persistence of commodity relations. The commodity is the economic cell of capitalist society; as long as it exists, its effects will make themselves felt in the organization of production and therefore in man's consciousness.

Marx's scheme conceived of the transition period as the result of the explosive transformation of the capitalist system torn apart by its inner contradictions; subsequent reality has shown how some countries, the weak limbs, detach themselves from the imperialist tree, a phenomenon foreseen by Lenin. In those countries, capitalism has developed sufficiently to make its effects felt upon the people in one way or another, but it is not its own inner contradictions that explode the system after exhausting all of its possibilities. The struggle for liberation against an external oppressor, the misery which has its origin in foreign causes, such as war whose consequences make the privileged classes fall upon the exploited, the liberation movements aimed at overthrowing neo-colonial regimes, are the customary factors in this process. Conscious action does the rest.

A Rapid Change Without Sacrifices is Impossible

In these countries there still has not been achieved a complete education for the work of society, and wealth is far from being within the reach of the masses through the simple process of appropriation. Underdevelopment on one hand, and the customary flight of capital to "civilized" countries on the other,

make impossible a rapid change without sacrifices. There still remains a long stretch to be covered in the building of the economic base and the temptation to follow the beaten paths of material interest as the lever of speedy development is very great.

There is a danger of not seeing the forest because of the trees. Pursuing the chimera of achieving socialism with the aid of the blunted weapons left to us by capitalism (the commodity as the economic cell, profitability and individual material interest as levers, etc.), it is possible to come to a blind alley. And the arrival there comes about after covering a long distance where there are many crossroads and where it is difficult to realize just when the wrong turn was taken. Meanwhile, the adapted economic base has undermined the development of consciousness. To build communism, a new man must be created simultaneously with the material base.

That is why it is so important to choose correctly the instrument of mass mobilization. That instrument must be fundamentally of a moral character, without forgetting the correct use of material incentives, especially those of a social nature.

Society Must be a Huge School

As I already said, in moments of extreme danger it is easy to activate moral incentives; to maintain their effectiveness, it is necessary to develop a consciousness in which values acquire new categories. Society as a whole must become a huge school.

The broad characteristics of the phenomenon are similar to the process of formation of capitalist consciousness in the system's first stage. Capitalism resorts to force but it also educates people in the system. Direct propaganda is carried out by those who are entrusted with the task of explaining the inevitability of a class regime, whether it be of divine origin or due to the imposition of nature as a mechanical entity. This placates the masses, who see themselves oppressed by an evil against which it is not possible to struggle.

This is followed by hope, which differentiates capitalism from the previous caste regimes that offered no way out. For some, the caste formula continues

in force: the obedient are rewarded by the **post mortem** arrival in other wonderful worlds where the good are required, and the old tradition is continued. For others, innovation: the division in classes is a matter of fate, but individuals can leave the class to which they belong through work, initiative, etc. This process, and that of self-education for success, must be deeply hypocritical; it is the interested demonstration that a lie is true.

In our case, direct education acquires much greater importance. Explanations are convenient because they are genuine; subterfuges are not needed. It is carried out through the State's educational apparatus in the form of general, technical and ideological culture, by means of bodies such as the Ministry of Education and the Party's information apparatus. Education takes place among the masses and the new attitude that is praised tends to become habit; the mass gradually takes it over and exerts pressure on those who have still not become educated. This is the indirect way of educating the masses, as powerful as the other structured one.

The Process of Individual Self-education

But the process is a conscious one; the individual receives the impact of the new social power and perceives that he is not completely adequate to it. Under the influence of the pressure implied in indirect education, he tries to adjust to a situation that he feels to be just and whose lack of development has kept him from doing so thus far. He is educating himself.

We can see the new man who begins to emerge in this period of the building of socialism. His image is as yet unfinished; in fact it will never be finished, since the process advances parallel to the development of new economic forms. Discounting those whose lack of education makes them tend towards the solitary road, towards the satisfaction of their ambitions, there are others who, even within this new picture of over-all advances, tend to march in isolation from the accompanying mass. What is important is that people become more aware every

day of the need to incorporate themselves into society and of their own importance as motors of that society.

They no longer march in complete solitude along lost roads towards far-off longings. They follow their vanguard, composed of the Party, of the most advanced workers, of the advanced men who move along bound to the masses and in close communion with them. The vanguards have their eyes on the future and its recompenses, but the latter are not envisioned as something individual; the reward is the new society where human beings will have different characteristics: the society of Communist man.

A Long and Difficult Road

The road is long and full of difficulties. At times, the route strays off course and it is necessary to retreat; at times, a too rapid pace separates us from the masses and on occasions the pace is slow and we feel upon our necks the breath of those who follow upon our heels. Our ambition as revolutionaries makes us try to move forward as far as possible, opening up the way before us, but we know that we must be reinforced by the mass, while the mass will be able to advance more rapidly if we encourage it by our example.

In spite of the importance given to moral incentives, the existence of two principal groups (excluding, of course, the minority fraction of those who do not participate for one reason or another in the building of socialism) is an indication of the relative lack of development of social consciousness. The vanguard group is ideologically more advanced than the mass; the latter is acquainted with the new values, but insufficiently. While in the former a qualitative change takes place which permits them to make sacrifices as a function of their vanguard character, the latter see only by halves and must be subjected to incentives and pressures of some intensity; it is the dictatorship of the proletariat being exercised not only upon the defeated class but also individually upon the victorious class.

To achieve total success, all of this involves the necessity of a series of mechanisms, the revolutionary institutions. The concept of institutionalization fits in with the images of the multitudes marching towards the future as that of a harmonic unit of canals, steps, dams, well-oiled apparatuses that make the march possible, that permit the natural selection of those who are destined to march in the vanguard and who dispense rewards and punishments to those who fulfill their duty or act against the society under construction.

Perfect Identification Between Government and Community

The institutionality of the Revolution has still not been achieved. We are seeking something new that will allow a perfect identification between the government and the community as a whole, adapted to the special conditions of the building of socialism and avoiding to the utmost the commonplaces of bourgeois democracy transplanted to the society in formation (such as legislative houses, for example). Some experiments have been carried out with the aim of gradually creating the institutionalization of the Revolution, but without too much hurry. We have been greatly restrained by the fear that any formal aspect might make us lose sight of the ultimate and most important revolutionary aspiration: to see man freed from alienation.

Notwithstanding the lack of institutions, which must be overcome gradually, the masses now make history as a conscious aggregate of individuals who struggle for the same cause. In spite of the apparent standardization of man in socialism, he is more complete; his possibilities for expressing himself and making himself heard in the social apparatus are infinitely greater, in spite of the lack of a perfect mechanism to do so.

It is still necessary to accentuate his conscious, individual and collective, participation in all the mechanisms of direction and production and associate it with the idea of the need for technical and ideological education, so that the individual will realize that these processes are closely interdepend-

ent and their advances are parallel. He will thus achieve total awareness of his social being, which is equivalent to his full realizations as a human being, having broken the chains of alienation.

This will be translated concretely into the reappropriation of his nature through freed work and the expression of his own human condition in culture and art.

Work Must Acquire a New Condition

In order for it to develop in culture, work must acquire a new condition; man as commodity ceases to exist and a system is established that grants a quota for the fulfillment of social duty. The means of production belong to society and the machine is only the front line where duty is performed. Man begins to free his thought from the bothersome fact that presupposed the need to satisfy his animal needs by working. He begins to see himself portrayed in his work and to understand its human magnitude through the created object, through the work carried out. This no longer involves leaving a part of his being in the form of labor power sold, which no longer belongs to him; rather, it signifies an emanation from himself, a contribution to the life of society in which he is reflected, the fulfillment of his social duty.

We are doing everything possible to give work this new category of social duty and to joint it to the development of technology, on the one hand, which will provide the conditions for greater freedom, and to voluntary work on the other, based on the Marxist concept that man truly achieves his full human condition when he produces without being compelled by the physical necessity of selling himself as a commodity.

It is clear that work still has coercive aspects, even when it is voluntary; man has still not transformed all the coercion surrounding him into conditioned reflexes of a social nature, and in many cases, he still produces under the pressure of the environment (Fidel calls this moral compulsion). He is still to achieve complete spiritual recreation in the presence of his own work, without the direct pressure of

the social environment but bound to it by new habits. That will be communism.

The change in consciousness does not come about automatically, just as it does not come about automatically in the economy. The variations are slow and not rhythmic; there are periods of acceleration, others are measured and some even involve a retreat.

Communism's First Transition Period

We must also consider, as we have pointed out previously, that we are not before a pure transition period such as that envisioned by Marx in the "Critique of the Gotha Program." but rather a new phase not foreseen by him: the first period in the transition to communism or in the building of socialism.

Elements of capitalism are present within this process, which takes place in the midst of violent class struggle. These elements obscure the complete understanding of the essence of the process.

If to this be added the scholasticism that has held back the development of Marxist philosophy and impeded the systematic treatment of the period, whose political economy has still not been developed, we must agree that we are still in diapers. We must study all the primordial features of the period before elaborating a more far-reaching economic and political theory.

The resulting theory will necessarily give pre-eminence to the two pillars of socialist construction: the formation of the new human being and the development of technology. We still have a great deal to accomplish in both aspects, but the delay is less justifiable as far as the conception of technology as the basis is concerned; here, it is not a matter of advancing blindly but rather of following for a sizeable stretch the road opened up by the most advanced countries of the world. This is why Fidel harps so insistently on the necessity of the technological and scientific formation of all of our people and especially of the vanguard.

Division Between Material and Spiritual Necessity

In the field of ideas that lead to non-productive activities, it is easier to see the division between material and spiritual needs. For a long time man has been trying to free himself from alienation through culture and art. He dies daily in the eight and more hours during which he performs as a commodity to resuscitate in his spiritual creation. But this remedy itself bears the germs of the same disease: he is a solitary being who seeks communion with nature. He defends his environment-oppressed individuality and reacts to esthetic ideas as a unique being whose aspiration is to remain immaculate.

It is only an attempt at flight. The law of value is no longer a mere reflection of production relations; the monopoly capitalists have surrounded it with a complicated scaffolding which makes of it a docile servant, even when the methods used are purely empirical. The artist must be educated in the kind of art imposed by the superstructure. The rebels are overcome by the apparatus and only exceptional talents are able to create their own work. The others become shamefaced wageworkers or they are crushed.

Artistic experimentation is invented and is taken as the definition of freedom, but this "experimentation" has limits which are imperceptible until they are clashed with, that is, when the real problems of man and his alienated condition are dealt with. Senseless anguish or vulgar pastimes are comfortable safety valves for human uneasiness; the idea of making art a weapon of denunciation and accusation is combatted.

If the rules of the game are respected, all honors are obtained — the honors that might be granted to a pirouette-creating monkey. The condition is not attempting to escape from the invisible cage.

A New Impulse for Artistic Experimentation

When the Revolution took power, the exodus of the totally domesticated took place; the others, revolutionaries or not, saw a new force. However, the

routes were more or less traced and the concept of flight was the hidden meaning behind the word freedom. This attitude, a reflection in consciousness of bourgeois idealism, was frequently maintained in the revolutionaries themselves.

In countries that have gone through a similar process, endeavors were made to combat these tendencies with an exaggerated dogmatism. General culture became something like a taboo and a formally exact representation of nature was proclaimed as the height of cultural aspiration. This later became a mechanical representation of social reality created by wishful thinking: the ideal society, almost without conflicts or contradictions, that man was seeking to create.

Socialism is young and makes mistakes. We revolutionaries often lack the knowledge and the intellectual audacity to face the task of the development of the new human being by methods different from the conventional ones, and the conventional methods suffer from the influence of the society that created them (once again the topic of the relation form and content appears).

Disorientation is great and the problems of material construction absorb us. There are no artists of great authority who also have great revolutionary authority.

Then men of the Party must take this task upon themselves and seek the achievement of the principal aim: to educate the people.

Socialist Realism Based on the Art of the Last Century

What is then sought is simplification, what everyone understands, that is, what the functionaries understand. True artistic experimentation is obliterated and the problem of general culture is reduced to the assimilation of the socialist present and the dead (and therefore not dangerous) past. Socialist realism is thus born on the foundation of the art of the last century.

But the realistic art of the 19th century is also class art, perhaps more purely capitalist than the decadent art of the 20th century, where the anguish of alienated man shows through. In culture, capi-

talism has given all that it had to give and all that remains of it is the foretaste of a bad-smelling corpse; in art, its present decadence. But why endeavor to seek in the frozen forms of socialist realism the only valid recipe? "Freedom" cannot be set against socialist realism because the former does not yet exist; it will not come into being until the complete development of the new society. But let us not attempt to condemn all post-mid-nineteenth century art forms from the pontifical throne of realism-at-all-costs; that would mean committing the Proudhonian error of the return to the past, and straitjacketing the artistic expression of the man who is born and being formed today. An ideological and cultural mechanism must be developed which will permit experimentation and clear out the weeds that shoot up so easily in the fertilized soil of State subsidization.

Twenty-First Century Man

The error of mechanical realism has not appeared (in Cuba), but rather the contrary. This is so because of the lack of understanding of the need to create a new human being who will represent neither XIXth century ideas nor those of our decadent and morbid century. It is the XXIst century man whom we must create, although this is still a subjective and unsystematic aspiration. This is precisely one of the basic points of our studies and work; to the extent that we make concrete achievements on a theoretical base or vice versa, that we come to broad theoretical conclusions on the basis of our concrete studies, we will have made a valuable contribution to Marxism-Leninism, to the cause of mankind.

The reaction against XIXth century man has brought a recurrence of XXth century decadence. It is not a very serious error, but we must overcome it so as not to leave the doors open to revisionism.

The large multitudes of people are developing themselves, the new ideas are acquiring an adequate impetus within society, the material possibilities of the integral development of each and every one of its members make the task ever more fruitful. The present is one of struggle; the future is ours.

Intellectuals Not Authentically

To sum up, the fault of many of our intellectuals and artists is to be found in their "original sin": they are not authentically revolutionary. We can attempt to graft elm trees so that they bear pears, but at the same time we must plant pear trees. The new generations will arrive free of "original sin." The likelihood that exceptional artists will arise will be that much greater because of the enlargement of the cultural field and the possibilities for expression. Our job is to keep the present generation, maladjusted by its conflicts, from becoming perverted and perverting the new generations. We do not want to create salaried workers docile to official thinking nor "fellows" who live under the wing of the budget, exercising freedom in quotation marks. Revolutionaries will be the authentic voice of the people. It is a process that requires time.

In our society, the youth and the Party play a big role. The former is particularly important because it is the malleable clay with which the new man, without any of the previous defects, can be formed. Youth receives treatment in consonance with our aspirations. Education is increasingly integral and we do not neglect the incorporation of the students into work from the very beginning. Our scholarship students do physical work during vacation or together with their studies. In some cases work is a prize, while in others it is an educational tool; it is never a punishment. A new generation is being born.

The Party: Vanguard Organization

The Party is a vanguard organization. The best workers are proposed by their comrades for membership. The Party is a minority but the quality of its cadres gives it great authority. Our aspiration is that the Party become a mass one, but only when the masses reach the level of development of the vanguard, that is, when they are educated for communism. Our work is aimed at providing that education. The Party is the living example: its

cadres must be full professors of assiduity and sacrifice; with their acts they must lead the masses to the end of the revolutionary task, which means years of struggle against the difficulties of construction, the class enemies, the defects of the past, imperialism. . .

I should now like to explain the role played by the personality, the man as the individual who leads the masses that make history. This is our experience, and not a recipe.

Fidel gave impulse to the Revolution in its first years. he has always given it leadership and set the tone, but there is a good group of revolutionaries developing in the same direction as Fidel and a large mass that follows its leaders because it has faith in them. It has faith in them because these leaders have known how to interpret the longings of the masses.

So That the Individual Feels More Fulfilled

It is not a question of how many kilograms of meat are eaten or how many times a year someone may go on holiday to the seashore or how many pretty imported things can be bought with present wages. It is rather that the individual feels greater fulfillment, that he has greater inner wealth and many more responsibilities. In our country the individual knows that the glorious period in which it has fallen to him to live is one of sacrifice; he is familiar with sacrifice.

The first came to know it in the Sierra Maestra and wherever there was fighting; later, we have known it in all Cuba. Cuba is the vanguard of America and must make sacrifices because it occupies the advance position, because, it points out to the Latin American masses the road to full freedom.

Within the country, the leaders have to fulfill their vanguard role; and it must be said with complete sincerity that in a true Revolution, to which you give yourself completely without any thought for material retribution, the task of the vanguard revolutionary is both magnificent and anguishing.

Let me say, with the risk of appearing ridiculous, that the true revolutionary is guided by strong

feelings of love. It is impossible to think of an authentic revolutionary without this quality. This is perhaps one of the great dramas of a leader; he must combine an impassioned spirit with a cold mind and make painful decisions without flinching. Our vanguard revolutionaries must idealize their love for the people, for the most hallowed causes, make it one and indivisible. They cannot descend, with small doses of daily affection, to the terrain where ordinary men put their love into practice.

A Large Dose of Humanity

The leaders of the Revolution have children who do not learn to call their father with their first faltering words; they have wives who must be part of the general sacrifice of their lives to carry the Revolution to its destination; their friends are strictly limited to their comrades in Revolution. There is no life outside the Revolution.

In these conditions, the revolutionary leaders must have a large dose of humanity, a large dose of a sense of justice and truth to avoid falling into dogmatic extremes, into cold scholasticism, into isolation from the masses. They must struggle every day so that their love of living humanity is transformed into concrete deeds, into acts that will serve as an example, as a mobilizing factor.

The revolutionary, ideological motor of the Revolution within his Party, is consumed by this uninterrupted activity that ends only with death, unless construction be achieved on a worldwide scale. If his revolutionary eagerness becomes dulled when the most urgent tasks are carried on a local scale and if he forgets about proletarian internationalism, the Revolution that he leads ceases to be a driving force and it sinks into a comfortable drowsiness which is taken advantage of by imperialism, our irreconcilable enemy, to gain ground. Proletarian internationalism is a duty, but it is also a revolutionary need. This is how we educate our people.

Dangers of Dogmatism and Weaknesses

It is evident that there are dangers in the present circumstances. Not only that of dogmatism, not only

that of the freezing up of relations with the masses in the midst of the great task; there also exists the danger of weaknesses in which it is possible to incur. If a man thinks that in order to devote his entire life to the Revolution, he cannot be distracted by the worry that one of his children lacks a certain article, that the children's shoes are in poor condition, that his family lacks some necessary item, with this reasoning, the seeds of future corruption are allowed to filter through.

In our case, we have maintained that our children must have or lack what the children of the ordinary citizen have or lack; our family must understand this and struggle for it. The Revolution is made by man, but man must forge his revolutionary spirit from day to day.

Thus we go forward. Fidel is at the head of the immense column — we are neither ashamed nor afraid to say so — —followed by the best Party cadres and right after them, so close that their great strength is felt, come the people as a whole, a solid bulk of individualities moving towards a common aim; individuals who have achieved the awareness of what must be done; men who struggle to leave the domain of necessity and enter that of freedom.

That immense multitude is ordering itself; its order responds to an awareness of the need for order; it is no longer a dispersed force, divisible in thousands of fractions shot into space like the fragments of a grenade, trying by any and all means, in a fierce struggle with their equals, to achieve a position that would give them support in the face of an uncertain future.

We know that we have sacrifices ahead of us and that we must pay a price for the heroic fact of constituting a vanguard as a nation. We the leaders know that we must pay a price for having the right to say that we are at the head of the people that is at the head of America.

Each and every one of us punctually pays his share of sacrifice, aware of being rewarded by the satisfaction of fulfilling our duty, aware of advancing with everyone towards the new human being, who is to be glimpsed on the horizon.

**We are More Free
Because
We are More Fulfilled**

Allow me to attempt to come to some conclusions:
We socialists are more free because we are more fulfilled; we are more fulfilled because we are more free.

The skeleton of our complete freedom is formed, but it lacks the protein substance and the draperies; we will create them.

Our freedom and its daily sustenance are the color of blood and swollen with sacrifice.

Our sacrifice is a conscious one; it is in payment for the freedom we are building.

The road is long and in part unknown; we are aware of our limitations. We will make the XXth century man; we ourselves.

We will be tempered in daily actions, creating a new human being with a new technology.

The personality plays the role of mobilization and leadership insofar as it incarnates the highest virtues and aspirations of the people and does not become detoured.

The road is opened up by the vanguard group, the best among the good, the Party.

The basic raw material of our work is the youth: in it we place our hopes and we are preparing it to take the banner from our hands.

If this faltering letter has made some things clear, it will have fulfilled my purpose in sending it.

Accept our ritual greetings, as a handshake or an "Ave Maria Purissima."

PATRIA O MUERTE

SPEECH DELIVERED
AT THE CLOSING EVENT
OF THE WEEK OF SOLIDARITY
WITH SOUTH VIET NAM,
ON DECEMBER 20, 1963

Comrades of the National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam;

Comrade Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Viet Nam;

The Revolutionary Government and the United Party of the Revolution have designated me to greet, on their behalf and on behalf of the people of Cuba, the liberation struggle of the South Vietnamese people and the Third Anniversary of the armed struggle for the liberation of its people.

The struggle of the Vietnamese people has been going on for many years; we say this because we must not regard the people of Viet Nam according to the artificial division established by the Geneva Agreements. When all of Viet Nam was still part of the French colonial power and was designated in our geography as Indochina, the people's forces began their long liberation struggle.

At the very moment when we in America were witnessing the fall of the only authentic democracy which at that time, the middle of 1954, existed in our continent, news reached us of the victory of the people's forces at Dien Bien Phu. It was like a warning signal to the imperialists, as if to let them know that a partial victory in some one spot of the world did not in any way mean the victory of imperialism, and it was also a signal of hope for the oppressed peoples of the world, that taught them that a partial defeat of the popular forces did not in any way mean the definitive frustration of the yearnings for liberty of the peoples.

A few months later the French colonial troops, convinced of the uselessness of a war in which the

French people were being worn down to exhaustion, agreed to stop the fighting and signed an Agreement in Geneva by means of which Viet Nam would be divided in two, an Agreement which, in its essential characteristics, was similar to the one which years before had also divided the Korean people into two halves.

But this time it was established that within a few years, a general election would take place by means of which the Vietnamese people would decide their own destiny. French imperialism, in frank retreat from this part of Asia, was ceding its place to US imperialism. And the US soon realized that any sort of free popular expression would only result in the total loss of its possessions in this zone, conceived by them as strategic, the South of Asia.

Thus they violated the Geneva Agreements, violated the will of all the Vietnamese people and began to prepare themselves for the long extermination war which they foresaw.

The people of South Viet Nam waited for some time. From 1954 when the war ended, until 1960 when it began once more, there were many peaceful manifestations, a peaceful struggle to demand respect for the will of a whole people. The time arrived when it became clear that there was nothing else to do but to rise up in arms again. And we say that there remained nothing else to do because this type of popular war of small armies and large unarmed bases against colonial powers that have all the means of destruction at their disposal, means tremendous exhaustion of the people and an enormous holocaust of the popular forces in order to finally obtain liberation. But there was no other road left and the struggle began once more in South Viet Nam.

At that time in America it had once more been announced to the rest of the world that the American peoples were not asleep nor had they definitely surrendered their liberation, and the Cuban Revolution was becoming what the US now publicly calls one of its great problems.

At around that time also, the liberation war of the Algerian people was reaching its climax, which some years later would result in the Evian Agreements followed by the liberation of the Algerian people

and establishment of its present Socialist Government.

America, Asia and Africa, the three oppressed continents, were giving signs in each of those continents that they would not put up much longer with the presence of the colonial powers. Later, new liberation wars arose. In Laos the situation remains unstable after having, at least, stopped the imperialists from carrying out their aspirations; in Angola and in Portuguese Guinea guerrilla warfare is taking place. And at present, in our continent, in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Santo Domingo, Colombia, Venezuela and Paraguay the people's forces are demonstrating their vitality and are demonstrating, besides, the impotence of the armies created for repression, created to liquidate the aspirations of the peoples for liberty.

In the last few months of this year great victories have been obtained on this continent by the popular forces in Venezuela and by the Liberation Army of South Viet Nam. Eight thousand enemy casualties caused in the last actions, of which four thousand are prisoners and deserters and four thousand killed or wounded, show the strength achieved by the movement in South Viet Nam.

The mountain bases of the North are practically liberated and the armed forces of South Viet Nam converge on the capital — Saigon — and are exercising more and more pressure on the power of the South Vietnamese puppets.

We cannot say how long this struggle will last. These are struggles of processes that sometimes, always, are too slow, with enormous sacrifices, but the forces of the people grow geometrically; and as soon as the correlation of forces offer a slight margin to the Party of the people, at that moment the solution is hastily precipitated.

That is what happened in our Cuba; that is how it happened in North Viet Nam, that is what happened in the very long liberation war which resulted in the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

At a given moment the popular forces reach such power that they go immediately into large scale offensives, transform their guerrilla action into regular military action, into operational tactics and, in a short time, destroy the oppressive power.

We can not say when the definite liberation of South Viet Nam will take place.

We cannot say when the liberation of each one of the peoples who today struggle, weapons in hand, for their liberty will be achieved. We do know that the unfailing result will be the liberty of the peoples. And when they carry it out with more enthusiasm, with more energy and with more faith, the shorter will be the period of suffering of all the population from the onslaughts of the oppressive power.

A few months ago the situation was such in South Viet Nam that the United States decided to make a change in the group in power. The dictator of the moment was not willing to accept this change, and the US once more gave an example of what happens to its puppets when, at a given moment, they do not strictly obey orders.

According to the information offered by the US news agencies, dictator Ngo Dim Diem and his brothers suffered what at the time was called an "accidental suicide." more or less the same thing that happened to Trujillo in our part of the world when he also refused to serve as a piece of barter in some of the transactions of convenience which the imperial power carries out when its machinery becomes obsolete.

Nevertheless, this is an indication that the situation has escaped the control of the forces in South Viet Nam, and the comrades of the National Liberation Front have clearly stated this. There are three roads. The present one, which uses local South Vietnamese troops and only a special team of advisors in the fight, in the repression and the torture, seems to be quickly showing its ineffectiveness. Thus the alternative of going into a direct invasion of South Viet Nam and the massive use of Yankee expeditionary forces. Of course, this will make the struggle much harder, but it will also make its need clearer to everyone.

If today, when we celebrate the victories and announce that there are 8 000 casualties in the South Vietnamese army of repression, one asks himself how many of those casualties are those of innocent men, men of the people who for one reason or another have been ensnared in the fight against liberty, as has happened so many times in Cuba,

where men became soldiers of Batista simply because they had no place to work; they had to offer their lives in the attempt to stop the development of the revolutionary struggle; if the Yankee interventionist troops were to penetrate en masse into South Viet Nam, we would know very well against whom we are shooting and why. And the whole world would understand much better who the enemy is, and would know how to identify it much quicker. And the Yankees also know this.

When today with all of our enthusiasm we raise the flag of South Viet Nam, we do it not only on behalf of proletarian internationalism, not only for the desire for justice which the Revolution has awakened in all of us; we do it also because that battle front is extremely important for the future of America.

There, in Viet Nam, the forces are being trained which one day will come to repress our guerrillas throughout the American Continent. All the new weapons of extermination and the most modern techniques are being tested there to be used in the fight against the liberty of the peoples.

At this moment, South Viet Nam is the great proving ground of Yankee imperialism, where they prepare all of their equipment for a conflict that, if such is possible, will perhaps be more important, and which it will have to carry on right in its own back yard, in its colonial possessions which cover all the American Continent.

And they also know that the victorious end of that struggle will mean the end of US imperialism. That is why they pay so much attention to it; not forgetting, of course, the natural strategic importance which South Viet Nam has a base of operations in the assault against the socialist block's flank in Asia. These two strategic characteristics make of South Viet Nam another of the serious problems which the new Yankee Administration faces; and surely at this moment they are making a profound analysis of this situation.

Of course it does not occur to anyone that they will provide a real and democratic peace and that without more ado they will allow the victory of the Vietnamese people and their unity as a nation so that they may actively begin, as their brothers in the North have already done, the construction

of socialism, starting from the backwardness inherited from colonialism and the destroyed riches inherited from the war. They have other tactics in mind and in different strategic sense. What will be their decision? We do not yet know it, but we forecast a long struggle and long suffering of the heroic people of South Viet Nam, in the same manner in which we forecast this for all the peoples who struggle for their liberty.

The forceful presence of the the Liberation Forces of Viet Nam, their constant successes, their constant advances towards the enemy's best defended zones are nevertheless, examples, which are gathered by our peoples. Our mission here in Cuba is to take up that living example, to let our people believe in it because of what it means in regard to justice and because of what it means as an integral part of the great fraternity of oppressed peoples of the world and, besides, to bring that example by all available means to oppressed America, to show how in all continents people are struggling, and how in all continents it is possible to carry on a struggle for the emancipation of the peoples. And besides this, to show our peoples of America something more; when the conditions for peaceful struggle are exhausted, when the reactionary powers time after time lie to the people, not only can the banner of the Revolution be raised, but it should also be raised on high. Let us not speak of specific countries, let us speak instead of specific situations; the way, the means and the day will be chosen by the peoples' forces in each country. But the examples are there, they are living examples; they show in spite of the chemical war, in spite of all the new methods of destruction which the Yankees test every day, how the struggle can be carried out. And if we stand for a minute before a map of Viet Nam — small as it is — and if we then stand before the 20 million square kilometers of our immense America, we will realize with even more certainty that the struggle can very easily be carried out.

And many peoples of America are ready for revolution, not only those who have already begun their struggle; there are some who have not yet begun and who, nevertheless, are patiently sharpening their machetes because they know that the

hour is near, they know that US imperialism will intervene in America, but they also know that its intervention will be made more difficult with the opening of each new battle front. And today Cuba is not just a country in this part of the world, it is a part of the one country that is our America, and it is also a symbol for all America.

Thus, as a people begin their struggle, they also begin to dig the grave of imperialism and they deserve all our support and our applause. Today there is an attempt to eliminate Cuba in order to eliminate its "bad" example; and let us think for one moment that this could be achieved, they would surely eliminate everything this government has done, all the social achievements and, of course, all the members of this government. We all know this very well, and that is why the struggle is to the death. The people of South Viet Nam also know this; there is no other alternative; either victory or complete destruction, of years of imperialist power trampling on the oppressed countries.

That is why the struggle must be well thought out, it must be mature but once it has begun it must be continued to the end; there can be no compromises, no middle terms, no peace that will only half-guarantee the stability of a country; the victory must be total.

With that purpose in mind our people are struggling; with that same purpose in mind the Algerian people struggled for seven long years.

And with that same conviction the people of South Viet Nam are struggling today. But they have some other advantages: they have all the warmth and support of their North Vietnamese brothers, they have, closer than anyone else, the example of a people unceasingly struggling for their independence, of their own brothers who fought for nine years to rid themselves of the French yoke, and they have the example of the present situation in North Viet Nam in comparison to that which South Viet Nam is suffering. For all these reasons, their faith should be even deeper, their confidence in victory even greater. Because of all this we know, as the comrade Delegate said, that in spite of whatever methods US imperialism may use in

the fighting, the final result will be the victory of South Viet Nam and the reunification of the entire country.

In bringing to a close the festivities of this week of salutations in honor of the third anniversary of the establishment of the Front, we greet our brother people of South Viet Nam as brothers in the struggle, as a shining example in these difficult moments of the history of the world, and as our colleagues, as our front-line soldiers in the first trenches of the struggle of the world proletariat against imperialism.

For all these reasons, when we gather here to greet the Vietnamese people, we greet true brothers, we embrace brothers who, in a far away region of the world, are struggling for our security and who are struggling for all the common hopes which at this moment unite all the people of the three oppressed continents:

Asia, Africa and our America.

Comrades, allow me to end these words of greeting with the cry which today has been repeated many times:

LONG LIVE THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET
NAM!!

LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY!!

LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!!

DEATH TO IMPERIALISM!!

PATRIA O MUERTE!!

SPEECH MADE
AT THE
AFRO-ASIAN ECONOMIC SEMINAR
CELEBRATED IN ALGERIA
IN 1965

Dear Brothers:

Cuba attends this Conference to raise on her own the voice of the peoples of America, and also, as we have emphasized on other occasions, to do so in her condition as an underdeveloped nation which is, at the same time, building socialism. It is not by accident that our delegation is permitted to utter its opinion among the peoples of Asia and Africa. A common aspiration unites us in our march toward the future: the defeat of imperialism; a common past of struggle against the same enemy has united us along the road.

This is an assembly of struggling peoples, and this struggle is developing on two equally important fronts which demand all our efforts. The struggle against imperialism for liberation from the shackles of colonialism and neocolonialism, to be brought about through the use of political arms and firearms, or a combination of both, is not disconnected from the struggle against backwardness: both are steps on the same road leading toward the creation of a new society, at the same time rich and just. It is imperative to take political power and to liquidate the oppressor classes, but then we must face the second stage of the struggle which may perhaps have more difficult features than the previous one.

Ever since capitalist monopolies took over the world they have kept the greater part of humanity in poverty, dividing the spoils among the most powerful countries. The standard of living in those countries is founded on the misery of ours. Thus, in order to raise the standard of living of the under-

developed peoples, there has to be a struggle against imperialism. And each time a country is pulled from the imperialist tree, this is not only a partial battle won against the principal enemy but also a contribution toward its real weakening, and a step toward the final victory.

There are no frontiers in this struggle to the death. We cannot remain indifferent to what happens anywhere in the world; a victory of any country over imperialism is a victory for us, and likewise, a defeat of any nation is a defeat for all. The practice of proletarian internationalism is not only a duty of the peoples who are struggling to secure a better future, but further, it is an unavoidable necessity. If the imperialist enemy, the United States or anyone else, unleashes its forces against the underdeveloped peoples and against the socialist countries, simple logic determines the need for an alliance between the underdeveloped peoples and the socialist countries. Were there no other uniting factor, the common enemy should provide one.

Of course, this union cannot be made spontaneously, without discussions, without a prior upheaval which is sometimes very painful. Each time a country frees itself, as we have said, it is a defeat for the world imperialist system, but we must agree that the severance is not effected through the mere act of declaring independence or by obtaining an armed victory in a revolution. The break occurs when the imperialist economic sway over a people is terminated. Therefore, it is in the vital interests of the socialist countries that these separations take place. And it is our international duty, the duty determined by the ideology that guides us, to contribute with our efforts toward the swiftest and most profound liberation possible.

A conclusion must be reached from all this: the development of the countries now starting on the road to liberation must be at the cost of the socialist countries. We state it this way without inending any blackmail or dramatics whatsoever, or looking for an easy way of getting closer to the Afro-Asian peoples; this is a profound conviction. Socialism cannot exist without a change in conscience provoking a new fraternal attitude toward humanity, as much in the character of the individual in the

society which is building or has built socialism, as in the world-wide attitude toward all peoples suffering from imperialist oppression.

We believe the responsibility for aiding dependent countries should be approached in such a spirit, and there should be no more talk about developing "for mutual benefit" trade based on prices imposed upon the underdeveloped countries by the law of values and on international relations of unequal exchange brought about by that law of values. How can one call "mutual benefit" the selling at world market prices of raw materials costing limitless toil and sacrifice to buy manufactured goods produced in large present-day automated factories?

If we establish that type of relation between the two groups of nations, we must agree that the socialist countries are, in a way, accomplices of imperialist exploitation. It can be argued that the amount of exchange with underdeveloped countries is an insignificant part of the foreign trade of those countries. It is very true, but it does not eliminate the immoral character of the trade.

The socialist countries have the moral duty of liquidating their tacit complicity with the exploiter countries of the West. The fact that trade is small today does not mean anything: in 1959 Cuba sold sugar only occasionally to a country of the socialist bloc, primarily through English brokers or brokers of other nationalities. Today, eighty percent of her trade is with that area; all her vital supplies come from the socialist camp and she has, in fact, joined that camp. We cannot say that this has been brought about merely by the increase in trade, nor that trade has increased through the destruction of the old order and the embracing of the socialist form of development; both extremes touch each other and are interrelated.

We did not undertake the path that leads to communism foreseeing all steps as the logical product of an ideological development that would advance with a determined goal. Socialist truth plus the naked truth of imperialism forged our people and showed them the path which we consciously adopted later. The peoples of Africa and Asia heading toward their definitive liberation should take the same path. They will follow it sooner or later,

although their socialism may take any defining adjective today. There is no other definition of socialism valid for us than the abolition of exploitation of man by man. As long as this has not been achieved, we are in the stage of building a socialist society, and if, instead of achieving this goal, we find that the task of suppressing exploitation has come to a halt or even slips backward, it is not valid even to speak of building socialism.

We have to prepare conditions so that our brothers directly and consciously take the path of the decisive abolition of exploitation, but we cannot ask them to take that path if we ourselves are accomplices in such exploitation. If we were asked what are the methods of establishing equitable prices, we could not answer, because we do not know the practical magnitude of that question. We only know that, after political discussions, the Soviet Union and Cuba have signed agreements advantageous for us, by means of which we will sell five million tons of sugar at fixed prices above those of the so-called free world sugar market. The People's Republic of China also pays these prices.

This is only the groundwork; the real task consists in establishing prices permitting development. A great change of conception would be to change the order of international relations; foreign trade should not determine policy but, on the contrary, it should be subordinated to a fraternal policy toward the peoples.

Let us briefly analyse the problem of long-term credits for developing basic industries. We frequently find that beneficiary countries are known to install industrial plants too large for their actual possibilities, whose products will not be consumed in their territories, compromising their reserves in the effort. Our reasoning is that socialist state's investments in their own territories weigh directly on the state budget and are only recovered by the use of the products in the elaboration process up to the very end of manufacture. We propose that some thought be given to the possibility of making this type of investment in underdeveloped countries.

In this way an immense underlying force in our continents, miserably exploited but never aided in

their development, could be put into motion, and a new stage of authentic international division of labour could be begun, based not on the history of what has been done up to now, but on what can be done in the future.

The states in whose territories the new investments are to be made will have all the inherent rights of sovereign property over them, without any payments or credits. The possessor is obliged to supply predetermined quantities of products to the investing countries for a certain number of years and at specific prices.

The method of financing the local part of the expenses incurred by the country engaged in investments of this kind is also worthy of study. The supplying of marketable goods on long-term credits to governments of underdeveloped countries would be one form of aid not requiring the expenditure of freely convertible funds.

Another of the difficult problems to solve is the mastering of technique. The shortage of technicians experienced by developing countries is well known to all.

Institutions of education and learning are lacking. Sometimes an active awareness of our needs and the decision to carry through, as a first priority, the policy of technical, cultural and ideological development are also absent.

The socialist countries should supply the aid for the organization of centers of technical education; they should insist on the paramount importance of this and supply technicians to fill the present need. It is necessary to insist further on this last point. Technicians coming to our countries must be exemplary. They are comrades who must face a strange environment, often hostile to technique, speaking a different language and with totally different customs. The technicians confronted with this difficult task should be, first of all, communists in the most profound and noble sense of the word. With this sole quality, plus a minimum of organization and flexibility, wonders will be performed.

We know it can be done because brother countries have sent us a certain number of technicians who have done more toward the development of our country than ten institutes, and have contributed

more to mutual friendship than ten ambassadors or a hundred diplomatic receptions.

If we could achieve the ends mentioned, and also put within the reach of all the underdeveloped countries all the technology of the advanced ones, without using the present method of patents protecting the discoveries of different nations, we would progress greatly in our common task.

Imperialism has been defeated in many partial battles, but it is still a considerable force in the world, and we cannot hope for its final defeat except through the effort and sacrifice of us all.

The aggregate of the measures proposed, however, cannot be taken unilaterally. We agree that the development of the underdeveloped countries should be paid for by the socialist countries. But the forces of the underdeveloped countries must also be brought into play and they must firmly follow the road of building a new society — whatever name it may take — where the machine, an instrument of work, may not be an instrument of exploitation of man by man. Neither can the confidence of socialist countries be expected if one cavillates between capitalism and socialism, trying to use both forces as counterweights in order to gain certain advantages from such competition. A new policy of absolute seriousness should govern the relations between the two groups of societies. It is necessary to emphasize, once more, that the means of production should be, preferably, in the hands of the state, so that the signs of exploitation may gradually disappear.

On the other hand, development cannot be abandoned to absolute improvisation; it is necessary to plan the building of the new society. Planning is one of the laws of socialism, without which it would not exist. Without correct planning there cannot be sufficient guarantees that all the economic sectors of any one country can be blended harmoniously to produce the forward strides which the epoch in which we live demands. Planning is not an isolated problem of each one of our small countries, distorted in their development, possessors of some raw materials or producers of some manufactured or semi-manufactured goods but lacking in most others. From the very first, planning should tend toward

regional groupings in order to coordinate the economies of countries and thus arrive at the integration of a genuine mutual benefit.

We believe that the present road is full of dangers, dangers not contemplated or foreseen for a distant future by some superior mind, but the obvious results of the present searing realities. The fight against colonialism has reached its final stages, but in the present era the colonial status is only a consequence of imperialist domination. As long as imperialism exists, by definition, it will exert its domination over other countries. That domination is today called neo-colonialism.

Neo-colonialism was developed first in South America, in the whole continent, and today begins to be noted with increasing intensity in Africa and Asia. Its forms of development and penetration have distinct characteristics. One is the brutal aggression we witness in the Congo. Brute force without consideration or disguise is its ultimate weapon. There is another more subtle one: the political penetration in liberated countries, unity with the growing indigenous bourgeoisie, the development of a parasitic bourgeoisie closely linked to foreign capitalist interests and favoured by a certain sense of well-being or a transitory raising of the standard of living of the peoples — because in a very backward country the simple step from feudal to capitalist relations implies a great advance, notwithstanding the fatal consequences that it may eventually have for the workers.

Neo-colonialism has shown its claws in the Congo. That is not a sign of power but of weakness; it had to revert to force, its ultimate weapon, as an economic argument. This engenders opposing reactions of great intensity. But it is also practised in another series of countries of Africa and Asia in a much more subtle way and is rapidly creating what some have called the South Americanization of those continents, that is, the development of a parasitic bourgeoisie adding nothing to the national wealth but, on the contrary, depositing, outside in the capitalist banks, their huge ill-gotten gains, and making pacts with foreigners to obtain more benefits with absolute disregard for the well-being of their people.

There are also other dangers such as competition between fraternal countries, politically friendly and sometimes neighbours, competing for the same investments at the same time and for markets that often cannot accept the goods. This competition has the disadvantage of wasting energies that could be used to much greater economic benefit; moreover, it concedes power to the imperialist monopolies.

Faced with the real impossibility of carrying out a definite project with the help of the socialist camp, on certain occasions this is done by agreement with the capitalists. But these capitalist investments have not only the disadvantage of the manner in which the loans are made but also others of great importance, such as the establishment of joint corporations with a dangerous neighbour.

As, generally, investments are parallel with those of other states, they tend toward divisions between friendly countries because of economic differences, as well as renewing the danger of capitalism, skillful in the presentation of images of development and well-being that clouds the understanding of many people.

Later on, the consequences of a saturation of similar products is the fall of prices in the market. The affected countries find themselves under the obligation of requesting new loans or permitting additional investment for competition. The falling of the economy into the hands of monopolies and the slow but certain return to the past is the ultimate consequence of such a policy. To our way of thinking, the only sure way of investing with imperialist power participation is for the state to have a direct share as the sole buyer of goods, limiting imperialist action to the contracting of supplies, and not permitting them to go beyond the front doors of our homes. And here it is just and proper to take advantage of imperialist contradictions in order to secure less burdensome terms.

It is necessary to pay attention to the "disinterested" economic, cultural and other aid which imperialism grants directly, or by way of puppet states which are better received in certain parts of the world.

If the dangers pointed out are not seen in time, the neo-colonial road may be opened — in countries

that have begun with faith and enthusiasm their task of national liberation — establishing monopoly domination with such gradual subtlety as to render detection difficult until after its effects have made themselves brutally felt.

There is a great task to undertake. Gigantic problems confront our two worlds, that of the socialist countries and the one called the Third World, problems directly related to man and his wellbeing and to the struggle against the main cause of our backwardness. In the face of them, all countries and peoples aware of their duties, of the dangers implied by their situation, of the sacrifices demanded by development, should take concrete measures to seal our friendship in the two fields — the economic and the political — that can never advance separately, and to organize a great, compact bloc which in turn will help new countries to free themselves not only from imperialist political power but from its economic power as well.

The question of armed liberation from the clutches of a political oppressor should be treated according to the rules of proletarian internationalism. If it is absurd to think that the director of an enterprise in a socialist country at war would be doubtful about sending to a front the tanks he produces when there is no guarantee of payment, no less absurd is the inquiry about the possibility of payment from a people fighting for liberation or needing arms to defend their freedom. Arms cannot be a commodity in our world. They should be delivered at no cost at all, and in the necessary and available quantities, to the peoples seeking them for use against the common enemy. That is the spirit in which the USSR and the People's Republic of China have offered us their military aid. We are socialists, we constitute a guarantee of the utilization of those arms, but we are not the only ones. All of us should receive the same treatment.

To the ominous attack by United States imperialism against Viet Nam and the Congo, the answer should be the supplying of all the instruments of defence they may need and the offering of our full and unconditional solidarity.

On the economic front, we must take the road to development with the most advanced techniques

available. We cannot follow the long, tortuous road of humanity from feudalism to the atomic and automated era. This would lead to many great sacrifices and would be almost useless. It is necessary to use advanced techniques wherever possible to achieve the great technical advances required to reduce the differences existing between the more developed countries and ourselves. This should develop in the form of large factories and in a properly developed agriculture as well. And above all, it should build its foundation on a technical and ideological culture with enough mass support and power to permit continuous nurturing of the institutes and research centers that must be created in each country, and to allow for the continuous education who may be capable of adapting men, using the present methods to newly acquired techniques.

These cadres must be aware of their duties toward the society in which they live. There can be no adequate technical culture without a complementary ideological culture. In most of our countries a proper foundation for industrial development, which determines the development of a modern society, could not exist if a beginning were not made by securing the necessary food, the most essential consumer goods and adequate education for the people.

A good part of national revenues must be spent on so-called unproductive investments in education, and special attention must be given to the development of agricultural productivity. This has reached unbelievable levels indeed in many capitalist countries, provoking the senseless crisis of overproduction, a surplus of grain and other nutrients or a surplus of industrial raw materials originating in advanced countries, when there is a whole world suffering from hunger with enough land and men produce several time what the entire world needs to feed its people.

Agriculture must be considered a fundamental pillar for development, and for this, changes in the agricultural structure, adjustments to the new technical possibilities and the duty to eliminate the exploitation of man should be fundamental aspects of the work.

Before making costly decisions that could cause irreparable damage, a careful survey of the national territory is needed. This is one of the preliminary steps in economic research and a primary requirement for correct planning.

We warmly support Algeria's proposition for institutionalizing our relations. We wish only to present certain complementary proposals: First, for the union to be an instrument for the struggle against imperialism, the cooperation of Latin American countries and the alliance of the socialist countries is necessary.

Second, we must watch over the revolutionary character of the union, preventing the intrusion of governments or movements not identified with the general aspirations of the people, and creating mechanisms to effect the separation of anyone deviating from the proper road, be it a government or a popular movement.

Third, we must advocate the establishment of new relations creating a revolutionary jurisprudence to defend us in case of conflict and to give new meaning to the relations between us and the rest of the world.

We speak a revolutionary language and we honestly fight for the triumph of that cause. But many times we entangle ourselves in the nets of an international law created as the result of confrontations of the imperialist powers and not by the struggle of the free peoples, of the just peoples.

Our peoples, for instance, suffer from the painful pressure of foreign bases established in their territories, or have to carry the heavy burdens of external debts of incredible magnitude.

The history of these tales is well known to us all. Puppet governments, governments weakened by long struggles for liberation or by the development of the capitalist laws of the market have permitted the signing of treaties endangering internal stability and compromising our future.

This is the time to shake off the yoke, to impose renegotiation of oppressive external debts, and to force the imperialists to abandon their bases of aggression.

I would not want to finish these words, this repetition of concepts you all know, without calling

the attention of this seminar to the fact that Cuba is not the only American country, it is simply the only one which has the opportunity to speak before you today, and other countries are shedding their blood to gain the rights we have. And from here, and from all conferences, and from all places where they may be held, along with our greetings to the heroic peoples of Viet Nam, of Laos, of so-called "Portuguese" Guinea, of South Africa, or of Palestine, of all the exploited countries fighting for their emancipation we should, at the same time, send our greetings and our friendship, and extend our hand to our brothers of Venezuela, Guatemala and Colombia who today are taking up arms and are saying a determined NO! to the imperialist enemy.

And there are few platforms so symbolic as Algiers, one of the most heroic capitals of freedom, at which to affirm this. Let the magnificent Algerian people, trained as few have been in suffering for independence, under the decisive leadership of their Party, with our dear comrade Ahmed Ben Bella at its head, serve us as an inspiration in this fight without quarter against world imperialism.

FAREWELL LETTER
TO FIDEL



"Havana
"Year of Agriculture"

"Fidel:

"At this moment I remember many things — when I met you in María Antonia's house, when you suggested my coming, all the tensions involved in the preparations.

"One day they asked who should be notified in case of death, and the real possibility of that fact affected all. Later we knew that it was true, that in revolution one wins or dies (if it is a real one). Many comrades fell along the way to victory.

"Today everything is less dramatic because we are more mature. But the fact is repeated. Y feel that I have fulfilled the part of my duty that tied me to the Cuban Revolution in its territory, and I say good-by to you, the Comrades, your people, who are already mine.

"I formally renounce my position in the National Leadership of the Party, my post as Minister, my rank of Major, and my Cuban citizenship. Nothing legal binds me to Cuba. The only ties are of another nature; those which cannot be broken as appointments can.

"Recalling my past life, I believe I have worked with sufficient honor and dedication to consolidate the revolutionary triumph. My only serious failing was not having confided more in you from the first moment in the Sierra Maestra, and not having understood quickly enough your qualities as a leader and a revolutionary.

"I have lived magnificent days and I felt at your side the pride of belonging to our people in the brilliant yet sad days of the Caribbean Crisis.

"Few times has a statesman been more brilliant than you in those days. I am also proud of having followed you without hesitation, identifying myself with your way of thinking and of appraising dangers and principles.

"Other nations of the world call for my modest efforts. I can do that which is denied you because of your responsibility at the head of Cuba, and the time has come for us to part.

"I want it known that I do it with mixed feelings, of joy and sorrow: I leave here the purest of my hopes as a builder, and the dearest of those I love. And I leave a people that received me as a son. That wounds me deeply. I carry to new battle fronts the faith that you taught me, the revolutionary spirit of my people, the feeling of fulfilling the most sacred of duties: to fight against imperialism wherever I may be. This comforts and heals the deepest wounds.

"I state once more that I free Cuba from any responsibility, except that which stems from its example. If my final hour finds me under other skies, my last thought will be of this people and especially of you. I am thankful for your teaching, your example, and I will try to be faithful to the final consequences of my acts. I have always been identified with the foreign policy of your Revolution, and I will continue to be. Wherever I am, I will feel the responsibility of being a Cuban revolutionary and as such I shall behave. I am not sorry that I leave my children and my wife nothing material. I am happy it is that way. I ask nothing for them, as I know the State will provide enough for their expenses and education.

"I would like to say much to you and to our people, but I feel it is not necessary. Words cannot express what I would want them to, and I don't think it's worth while to banter phrases.

"Onward to victory always. ¡Patria o Muerte!

"I embrace you with all my revolutionary fervor."

CHE

MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLES
OF THE WORLD
THROUGH THE TRICONTINENTAL

**Now is the time of the furnaces, and
only light should be seen.**

José Martí

Twenty-one years have already elapsed since the end of the last world conflagration; numerous publications in every possible language, celebrate this event, symbolized by the defeat of Japan. There is a climate of apparent optimism in many areas of the different camps into which the world is divided.

Twenty-one years without a world war, in these times of maximum confrontations, of violent clashes and sudden changes, appears to be a very high figure. However, without analyzing the practical results of this peace (poverty, degradation, increasing exploitation of enormous sectors of humanity) for which all of us would do well to inquire if this peace is real.

It is not the purpose of these notes to detail the different conflicts of a local character that have been occurring since the surrender of Japan, neither do we intend to recount the numerous and increasing instances of civilian strife which have taken place during these years of apparent peace. It will be enough just to name, as an example against undue optimism, the wars of Korea and Viet Nam.

In the first of these, after years of savage warfare, the Northern part of the country was submerged in the most terrible devastation known in the annals of modern warfare: riddled with bombs; without

factories, schools or hospitals; with absolutely no shelter for housing ten million inhabitants.

Under the discredited flag of the United Nations, dozens of countries under the military leaderships of the United States participated in this war with the massive intervention of US soldiers and the use, as cannon fodder, of the drafted South Korean population. On the other side, the army and the people of Korea and the volunteers from the People's Republic of China were furnished with supplies and technical aid by the Soviet military apparatus. The US tested all sorts of weapons of destruction, excluding the thermonuclear type, but including, on a limited scale, bacteriological and chemical warfare.

In Viet Nam, the patriotic forces of that country have carried on an almost uninterrupted war against three imperialist powers: Japan, whose might suffered an almost vertical collapse after the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; France, that recovered from that defeated country its Indo-China colonies and ignored the promises it had made in harder times; and the United States, in this last phase of the struggle.

There have been limited confrontations in every continent although in Our America, for a long time, there were only incipient liberation struggles and military coups d'état until the Cuban Revolution sounded the alert, signaling the importance of this region. This action attracted the wrath of the imperialists and Cuba was finally obliged to defend its coasts, first in Playa Girón, and again during the October Crisis.

This last incident could have unleashed a war of incalculable proportions if a US-Soviet clash had occurred over the Cuban questions.

But, evidently, the focal point of all contradictions is at present the territory of the peninsula of Indo-China and the adjacent areas. Laos and Viet Nam are torn by civil wars which have ceased being such by the entry into the conflict of US imperialism with all its might, thus transforming the whole zone into a dangerous powder keg ready at any moment to explode.

In Viet Nam the confrontation has assumed extremely acute characteristics. It is not our intention, either, to chronicle this war. We shall simply remember and point out some milestones.

In 1954, after the annihilating defeat of Dien Bien Phu, an agreement was signed at Geneva dividing the country into two separate zones; elections were to be held within a term of 18 months to determine who should govern Viet Nam and how the country should be reunified. The US did not sign this document and started maneuvering to substitute the emperor, Bao Dai, who was a French puppet, for a man more amenable to its purposes. This happened to be Ngo Dien Diem, whose tragic end -- that of an orange squeezed dry by imperialism -- is well known by all.

During the months following the agreement, optimism reigned supreme in the camp of the popular forces. The last redoubts of the anti-French resistance were dismantled in the South of the country and they awaited the fulfillment of the Geneva Agreements. But the patriots soon realized there would be no elections -- unless the United States felt itself capable of imposing its will in the polls, which was practically impossible even resorting to all its fraudulent methods. Once again fighting broke out in the South and gradually acquired full intensity. At present the US invading army has increased to nearly half a million troops, while the puppet forces decreased in number and, above all, have totally lost their combativeness.

Almost two years ago the United States started systematically bombing the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, in yet another attempt to overcome the resistance of the South and impose, from a position of strength, a meeting at the conference table. At first, the bombardments were more or less isolated occurrences and were represented as reprisals for alleged provocations from the North. Later on, as they increased in intensity and regularity, they became one gigantic attack carried out by the air force of the United States, day after day, for the purpose of destroying all vestiges of civilization in the Northern zones of the country. This is an episode of the infamously notorious "escalation."

The material aspirations of the Yankee world have been fulfilled to a great extent, despite the unflinching defense of the Vietnamese antiaircraft artillery, of the numerous planes shot down (over 1700) and of the socialist countries' aid in war supplies.

This is the sad reality: Viet Nam — a nation representing the aspirations, the hopes of a whole world of forgotten peoples — is tragically alone. This nation must endure the furious attacks of US technology, with practically no possibility of reprisals in the South and only some of defense in the North — but always alone.

The solidarity of all progressive forces of the world with the people of Viet Nam today is similar to the bitter irony of the plebeians urging on the gladiators in the Roman arena. It is not a matter of wishing success to the victim of aggression, but of sharing his fate; one must accompany him to his death or to victory.

When we analyze the lonely situation of the Vietnamese people, we are overcome by anguish at this illogical fix in which humanity finds itself.

US imperialism is guilty of aggression — its crimes are enormous and cover the whole world. We already know all that, gentlemen! But this guilt also applies to those who, when the time came for a definition, hesitated to make Viet Nam an inviolable part of the socialist world; running, of course, the risks of a war on a global scale — but also forcing a decision upon imperialism. The guilt also applies to those who maintain a war of abuse and maneuvering — started quite some time ago by the representatives of the two greatest powers of the socialist camp.

We must ask ourselves, seeking an honest answer: Is Viet Nam isolated, or is it not? Is it not maintaining a dangerous equilibrium between the two quarrelling powers?

And what great people these are! What stoicism and courage! And what a lesson for the world is contained in this struggle! Not for a long time shall we be able to know if President Johnson ever seriously thought of bringing about some of the reforms needed by his people — to iron out the barbed class contradictions that grow each day

with explosive power. The truth is that the improvements announced under the pompous title of the "Great Society" have been poured down the drain of Viet Nam.

The largest of all imperialist powers feels in its own guts the bleeding inflicted by a poor and underdeveloped country; its fabulous economy feels the strain of the war effort. Murder is ceasing to be the most convenient business for its monopolies. Defensive weapons, and never in adequate number, is all these extraordinary Vietnamese soldiers have — besides love for their homeland, their society, and unsurpassed courage. But imperialism is bogging down in Viet Nam, is unable to find a way out and desperately seeks one that will overcome with dignity this dangerous situation in which it now finds itself. Furthermore, the Four Points put forward by the North and the North and the Five Points of the South now corner imperialism, making the confrontation even more decisive.

Everything indicates that peace, this unstable peace which bears the name for the sole reason that no world-wide conflagration has taken place, is again in danger of being destroyed by some irrevocable and unacceptable step taken by the United States.

What role shall we, the exploited people of the world, play? The peoples of the three continents focus their attention on Viet Nam and learn their lesson. Since imperialists blackmail humanity by threatening it with war, the wise reaction is not to fear war. The general tactics of the people should be to launch a constant and a firm attack on all fronts where the confrontation is taking place.

In those places where the meager peace we have has been violated, what is our duty? To liberate ourselves at any price.

The world panorama is of great complexity. The struggle for liberation has not yet been undertaken by some countries of ancient Europe, sufficiently developed to realize the contradictions of capitalism, but weak to such a degree that they are unable either to follow imperialism or to start on their own road. Their contradictions will reach an explosive stage during the forthcoming years — but their problems and, consequently, their solutions are

different from those of our dependent and economically underdeveloped countries.

The fundamental field of imperialist exploitation comprises the three underdeveloped continents: America, Asia and Africa. Every country has also its own characteristics, but each continent, as a whole, also presents a certain unity. Our America is integrated by a group of more or less homogeneous countries and in most parts of its territory US monopoly capital maintains an absolute supremacy. Puppet government or, in the best of cases, weak and fearful local rulers, are incapable of contradicting orders from their Yankee master. The United States has nearly reached the climax of its political and economic domination; it could hardly advance much; any change in the situation could bring about a setback. Its policy is to maintain that which has already been conquered. The line of action, at the present time, is limited to the brutal use of force with the purpose of thwarting the liberation movements, no matter of what type they might happen to be .

The slogan "we will not allow another Cuba" hides the possibility of perpetrating aggressions without fear of reprisal, such as the one carried out against the Dominican Republic, or before that, the massacre in Panama — and the clear warning stating that Yankee troops are ready to intervene anywhere in America where the established order may be altered, thus endangering their interests. This policy enjoys an almost absolute impunity: the OAS is a suitable mask, in spite of its unpopularity; the inefficiency of the UN is ridiculous as well as tragic; the armies of all American countries are ready to intervene in order to smash their peoples. The International of Crime and Treason has in fact been organized. On the other hand, the national bourgeoisies have lost all their capacity to oppose imperialism — if they ever had it — and they have become the last card in the pack. There are no other alternatives; either a socialist revolution or a make-believe revolution.

Asia is a continent with different characteristics. The struggle for liberation waged against a series of European colonial powers resulted in the establishment of more or less progressive govern-

ments, whose ulterior evolution has brought about, in some cases, the reaffirming of the primary objectives of national liberation and in others, a setback towards the adoption of proimperialist positions.

From the economic point of view, the United States had very little to lose and much to gain in Asia. These changes benefited their interests; the struggle for the overthrow of other neocolonial powers and the penetration of new spheres of action in the economic field is carried out sometimes, directly, occasionally through Japan.

But there are special political conditions, in Asia, particularly in Indo-China, which create certain characteristics of capital importance and play a decisive role in the entire US military strategy.

The imperialists encircle China through South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, South Viet Nam and Thailand, at least.

This dual situation: a strategic interest as important as the military encirclement of the People's Republic of China and the penetration of these great markets — which do not dominate yet — turns Asia into one of the most explosive points of the world today, in spite of its apparent stability outside of the Vietnamese war zone.

The Middle East, though geographically a part of this continent, has its own contradictions and is actively in ferment; it is impossible to foretell how far the cold war between Israel, backed by the imperialists, and the progressive countries of that zone will go. This is just another of the volcanoes threatening eruption in the world today.

Africa offers an almost virgin territory to the neocolonial invasion. There have been changes which to some extent, forced neocolonial powers to give up their former absolute prerogatives. But when these changes are carried out without interruption, colonialism continues in the form of neocolonialism with similar effects as far as the economic situation is concerned.

The United States had no colonies in this region but is now struggling to penetrate its partners' fiefs. It can be said that following the strategic plans of US imperialism, Africa constitutes its long-

range reservoir; its present investments, though, are only important in the Union of South Africa and its penetration is beginning to be felt in the Congo, Nigeria and other countries where a sharp rivalry with other imperialist powers is beginning to take place (non-violent up to the present time).

So far it does not have great interests to defend there except its assumed right to intervene in every spot of the world where its monopolies detect the possibility of huge profits or the existence of large reserves of raw materials.

All this past history justifies our concern over the possibilities of liberating the peoples within a moderate or a short period of time.

If we stop to analyze Africa we observe that in the Portuguese colonies of Guinea, Mozambique and Angola the struggle is waged with relative intensity, with particular success in the first and with variable success in the other two. We still witness in the Congo the dispute between Lumumba's successors and the old accomplices of Tshombe a dispute which at the present time seems to favor the latter, those who "pacified" a large area of the country for their own benefit — though the war is still latent.

In Rhodesia we have a different problem: British imperialism used every means within its reach to place power in the hands of the white minority, now in control. The conflict, from the British point of view, is absolutely unofficial; this Western power, with its habitual diplomatic cleverness — also called hypocrisy in plain language — presents a facade of displeasure before the measures adopted by the government of Ian Smith. Its crafty attitude is supported and followed by some Commonwealth countries, but is attacked by a large group of countries belonging to Black Africa, even by some that are still docile economic vassals of British imperialism.

Should the efforts of Rhodesia's black patriots to organize armed rebellion crystallize and should this movement be effectively supported by neighboring African nations, the situation in that country could become extremely explosive. But for the moment all these problems are being discussed in such innocuous organizations as the UN, the Commonwealth and the OAU.

Nevertheless, the social and political evolution of Africa does not lead us to expect a continental revolution. The liberation struggle against the Portuguese should end victoriously, but Portugal means nothing in the imperialist field. The confrontations of revolutionary importance are those which place at bay all the imperialist apparatus, though this does not mean that we should stop fighting for the liberation of the three Portuguese colonies and for the deepening of their revolutions.

When the black masses of South Africa or Rhodesia start their authentic revolutionary struggle, a new era will dawn in Africa. Or when the impoverished masses of a nation rise up to rescue their right to a decent life from the hands of the ruling oligarchies.

Up to now, army putsches have followed one another; a group of officers succeeds one another or replaces rulers who no longer serve their caste interests and those of the powers who covertly manage them — but there are no great popular upheavals. In the Congo these characteristics appeared briefly, generated by the memory of Lumumba, but they have been losing strength in the last few months.

In Asia, as we have seen, the situation is explosive. The points of friction are not only Viet Nam and Laos, where actual fighting is going on, but also Cambodia, where a direct US aggression may start at any time, Thailand, Malaya, and, of course, Indonesia, where we cannot assume that the last word has been said, despite the annihilation of the Communist Party of that country carried out by the reactionaries when they took power. And also, naturally there is the Middle East.

In Latin America armed struggle is underway in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia and the first uprisings are appearing in Brazil. Other foci of resistance appear and are later extinguished. But almost every country of this continent is ripe for a type of struggle that, in order to achieve victory, cannot be content with anything less than establishing a government of a socialist nature.

On this continent, for all practical purposes, only one tongue is spoken (with the exception of Brazil, with whose people those who speak Spanish can

easily make themselves understood, owing to the great similarity of both languages). There is also a great similarity among the classes of the different countries, that an identification exists among them, as an "international American" type, much more complete than that of other continents. Language, customs, religion, a common foreign master, unite them. The degree and forms of exploitation are similar for both the exploiters and the exploited in many of the countries of Our America. And rebellion is ripening swiftly.

We may ask ourselves: how will this rebellion come to fruition? What type will it be? We have maintained for quite some time now that, owing to the similarity of national characteristics, the struggle in Our America will achieve, in due course, continental proportions. It will be the scene of many great battles fought for the liberation of humanity.

Within the overall struggle on a continental scale, the battles which are now taking place are only episodes — but they have already furnished their martyrs, who will figure in the history of Our America as having given their necessary quota of blood in this last stage of the fight for the total freedom of Man. These names will include Major Turcios Lima, the priest Camilo Torres, Major Fabricio Ojeda, Majors Lobatón and Luis de la Puente Uceda, all outstanding figures in the revolutionary movements of Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela and Peru.

But the active mobilization of the people creates new leaders; César Montes and Yon Sosa raise the flag of battle in Guatemala; Fabio Vázquez and Marulanda in Colombia; Douglas Bravo in the western half of the country and Américo Martín in El Bachiller direct their respective fronts in Venezuela. New uprisings will take place in these and other countries of Our America, as has already happened in Bolivia; they will continue to grow in the midst of all the hardships inherent in this dangerous profession of the modern revolutionary. Many will perish, victims of their errors; others will fall in the hard battle ahead; new fighters and new leaders will appear in the heat of the revolutionary struggle. The people will produce their

fighters and leaders in the selective process of the war itself — and Yankee agents of repression will increase. Today there are military “advisers” in all the countries where armed struggle exists, and the Peruvian army, trained and advised by the Yankees, apparently carried out a successful action against the revolutionaries in that country. But if the foci of war grow with sufficient political and military wisdom, they will become practically invincible, obliging the Yankees to send reinforcements. In Peru itself many new figures, practically unknown, are now tenaciously and firmly reorganizing the guerrilla movement. Little by little, the obsolete weapons which are sufficient for the repression of small armed bands will be exchanged for modern armaments and the US military “advisers” will be substituted by US soldiers until, at a given moment, they will be forced to send increasingly greater numbers of regular troops to ensure the relative stability of a government whose national puppet army is disintegrating before the attacks of the guerrillas. It is the road of Viet Nam; it is the road that should be followed by the peoples of the world; it is the road that will be followed in Our America, with the special characteristic that the armed groups may create something like Coordinating Councils to frustrate the repressive efforts of Yankee imperialism and contribute to the revolutionary cause.

America, a forgotten continent in the world's more recent liberation struggles, which is now beginning to make itself heard through the Tricontinental in the voice of the vanguard of its peoples, the Cuban Revolution, has before it a task of much greater relevance: to create a Second or a Third Viet Nam, or the Second and Third Viet Nam of the world.

We must bear in mind that imperialism is a world system, the last stage of capitalism — and it must be defeated in a great world confrontation. The strategic end of this struggle must be the destruction of imperialism. Our part, the responsibility of the exploited and underdeveloped of the world, is to eliminate the foundations of imperialism: our oppressed nations, from which they extract capital, raw materials, cheap technicians and common labor, and to which they export new capital — instrument

of domination —, arms and every kind of article, submerging us in absolute dependence.

The fundamental element of this strategic end is, then, the real liberation of all peoples, a liberation that will be brought about in most cases through armed struggle and will, in Our America, almost certainly have the characteristic of becoming a Socialist Revolution.

In envisaging the destruction of imperialism, it is necessary to identify its head, which is no other than the United States of America.

We must carry out a general task which has as its tactical purpose drawing the enemy out of his natural environment, forcing him to fight in places where his living habits clash with the existing reality. We must not underrate our adversary; the US soldier has technical capacity and is backed by weapons and resources of such magnitude as to render him formidable. He lacks the essential ideological motivation which his bitterest enemies of today — the Vietnamese soldiers — have in the highest degree. We will only be able to triumph over such an army by undermining its morale — and that is accomplished by causing it repeated defeats and repeated punishment.

But this brief scheme for victory implies immense sacrifice by the people, sacrifice that should be demanded beginning today, in plain words, and which perhaps may be less painful than what they would have to endure if we constantly avoided battle in an attempt to have others pull our chestnuts out of the fire.

It is probable, of course, that the last country to liberate itself will accomplish this without armed struggle and that people may be spared the sufferings of a long and cruel war against the imperialists. But perhaps it will be impossible to avoid this struggle or its effects in a global conflagration and the last country's suffering may be the same, or even greater. We cannot foresee the future, but we should never give in to the defeatist temptation of being leaders of a nation that yearns for freedom but abhors the struggle it entails and awaits its freedom as a crumb of victory.

It is absolutely just to avoid all useless sacrifice. For that reason, it is necessary to study carefully

the real possibilities that dependent America may have of liberating itself through peaceful means. For us, the answer to this question is quite clear: the present moment may or may not be the proper one for starting the struggle, but we cannot harbour any illusions, and we have no right to do so, that freedom can be obtained without fighting. And the battles will not be mere street fights with stones against tear-gas bombs, nor pacific general strikes; neither will they be those of a furious people destroying in two or three days the repressive superstructure of the ruling oligarchies. The struggle will be long, harsh, and its battle fronts will be the guerrilla's refuge, the cities, the homes of the fighters — where the repressive forces will go seeking easy victims among their families —, among the massacred rural population, in the villages or cities destroyed by the bombardments of the enemy.

They themselves impel us to this struggle; there is no alternative other than to prepare it and decide to undertake it.

The beginnings will not be easy; they will be extremely difficult. All of the oligarchies — power of repression, all of their capacity for brutality and demagoguery will be placed at the service of their cause. Our mission, in the first hour, will be to survive; later, we will follow the perennial example of the guerrilla, carrying out armed propaganda (in the Vietnamese sense, that is, the propaganda of bullets, of battles won or lost — but fought — against the enemy). The great lesson of the invincibility of the guerrillas will take root in the dispossessed masses. The galvanizing of national spirit, preparation for harder tasks, for resisting even more violent repressions. Hatred as an element of struggle; relentless hatred of the enemy that impels us over and beyond the natural limitations of man and transforms us into effective, violent selective and cold killing machines. Our soldiers must be thus; a people without hatred cannot vanquish a brutal enemy. We must carry the war as far as the enemy carries it: to his home, to his centers of entertainment, in a total war. It is necessary to prevent him from having a moment of peace, a quiet moment outside his barracks or even inside; we must attack him wherever he may be, make

him feel like a cornered beast wherever he may move. Then his morale will begin to fall. He will become still more savage, but we shall see the signs of decadence begin to appear.

And let us develop a true proletarian internationalism, with international proletarian armies; let the flag under which we fight be the sacred cause of redeeming humanity, so that to die under the flag of Viet Nam, of Venezuela, of Guatemala, of Laos, of Guinea, of Colombia, of Bolivia, of Brazil — to name only a few scenes of today's armed struggle — be equally glorious and desirable for an American, an Asian, an African, or even a European.

Each drop of blood spilled in a country under whose flag one has been born is an experience for those who survive to apply later in the liberation struggle of their own countries. And each nation liberated is a step toward victory in the battle for the liberation of one's own country.

The time has come to settle our discrepancies and place everything we have at the service of the struggle.

We all know that great controversies agitate the world now fighting for freedom; no one can hide it. We also know that these controversies have reached such intensity and such bitterness that the possibility of dialogue and reconciliation seems extremely difficult, if not impossible. It is useless to search for means and ways to propitiate a dialogue which the hostile parties avoid. But the enemy is there; it strikes every day, and threatens us with new blows and these blows will unite us, today, tomorrow, or the day after. Whoever understands this first, and prepares for this necessary union will earn the people's gratitude.

Because of the virulence and the intransigence with which each cause is defended, we, the dispossessed, cannot take sides with one or the other form of manifestation of these discrepancies, even if we at times coincide with the contentions of one party or the other, or in greater measure with those of one part than with those of the other. In time of war, the expression of current differences constitutes a weakness; but as things stand at this

moment, it is an illusion to hope to settle these differences by means of words. Time will erase them or give them their true explanation.

In our struggling world, all discrepancies regarding tactics and methods of action for the attainment of limited objectives should be analyzed with the respect that the opinions of others deserve. Regarding our great strategic objective, the total destruction of imperialism via armed struggle, we should be uncompromising.

Our aspirations to victory may be summed up thus: total destruction of imperialism by eliminating its firmest bulwark: imperialist domination by the United States of America. To carry out, as a tactical method, the gradual liberation of the peoples, one by one or in groups forcing the enemy into a difficult fight far from its own territory; liquidation of all of its sustaining bases, that is, its dependent territories.

This means a long war. And, we repeat once more, a cruel war. Let no one fool himself at the outstart and let no one hesitate to begin in fear of the consequences it may bring to his peoples. It is almost our sole hope for victory. We cannot elude the call of this hour. Viet Nam is pointing it out with its endless lesson of heroism, its tragic and everyday lesson of struggle and death for the attainment of final victory.

There, the imperialist soldiers encounter the discomforts of those who, accustomed to the vaunted US standard of living, must face a hostile land, the insecurity of those who are unable to move without being aware of walking on enemy territory, death to those who advance beyond their fortified encampments, the permanent hostility of an entire population. All this provokes internal repercussions in the United States and propitiates the resurgence of a factor which was attenuated in the full vigor of imperialism class struggle even within its own territory.

What a luminous, near future would be visible to us if two, three or many Viet Nams flourished throughout the world with their share of death and their immense tragedies, their everyday heroism and their repeated blows against imperialism oblig-

ing it to disperse its forces under the attack and the increasing hatred of all the people of the earth!

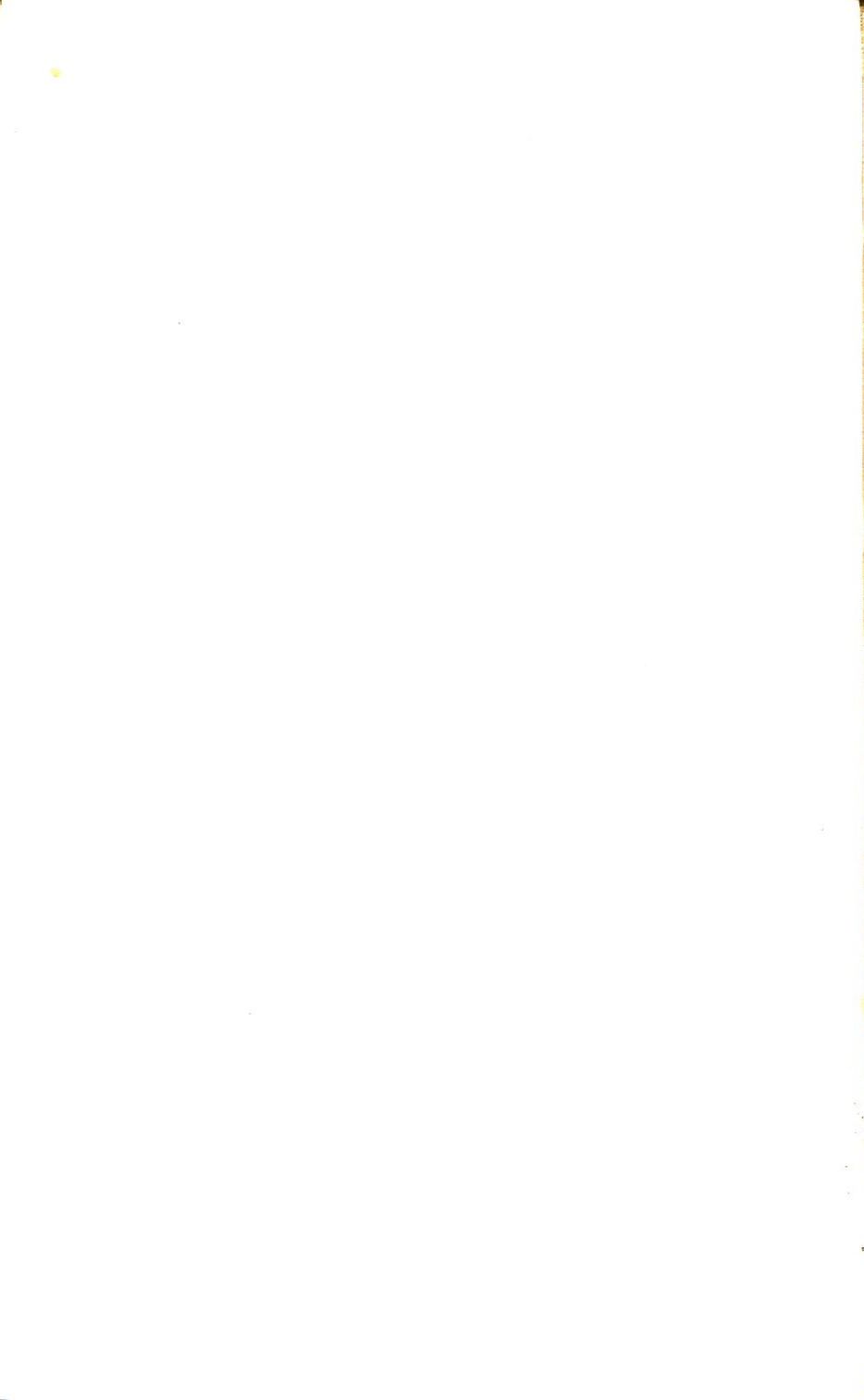
And if we were all capable of uniting to make our blows more solid and more infallible so that the effectiveness of every kind of support given to the struggling peoples were increased — how great and how near that future would be!

If we, those of us who, on a small point of the world map, fulfill our duty and place at the disposal of this struggle whatever little we are able to give: our lives, our sacrifice, must some day breathe our last breath in any land, not our own yet already ours, sprinkled with our blood, let it be known that we have measured the scope of our actions and that we consider ourselves no more than elements in the great army of the proletariat, but that we are proud to have learned from the Cuban Revolution, and from its maximum leader, the great lesson emanating from Cuba's attitude in this part of the world: "What do the dangers or the sacrifices of a man or of a nation matter, when the destiny of humanity is at stake?"

Our every action is a battle cry against imperialism, and a call for the peoples' unity against the great enemy of mankind: the United States of America. Wherever death may surprise us, it will be welcome, provided that this, our battle cry, reach some receptive ear, that another hand be extended to take up our weapons and that other men come forward to intone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine guns and new cries of battle and victory.

CHE

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