

SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMMANDER IN CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO RUZ AT THE GREAT POPULAR RALLY STAGED BY THE PEOPLE OF CUBA AT THE CIVIC SQUARE OF THE REPUBLIC ON 2 SEPTEMBER 1960. [1]

Date:

02/09/1960

(THE PEOPLE RECEIVE FIDEL SINGING IN CHORUS THE REVOLUTIONARY SLOGANS OF: "FIDEL, FIDEL, WHAT DOES FIDEL HAVE THAT AMERICANS CAN'T BEAT"; "FIDEL, FOR SURE, HIT THE YANKEES HARD"; "CUBA YES! YANKEES NO! AND OTHERS, AND THE PEOPLE STAY SILENT THROUGH THE NATIONAL ANTHEM).

Citizens:

It is obvious that each of you, from where you are sitting, is completely unable to see the vast size of the crowd which has gathered this afternoon. It is a true sea of humanity which stretches into the distance on both sides of the Civic Square.

For us, the men of the Revolutionary Government, who have seen many popular gatherings, this one is so huge that it impresses us deeply and helps to show us the vast responsibility which you and we carry upon our shoulders.

The people have gathered today to discuss important matters, particularly those of an international nature. But why has no one remained at home? Why has this been the largest gathering our people have held since the triumph of the revolution? Why? Because our people know what they are defending, our people know what battle they are waging. And as our people know that they are waging a great struggle for their survival and triumph, and since our people are a combative and a courageous people -- that is why Cubans are present here.

And it's a pity that today, when we are going to discuss the same questions as were discussed in Costa Rica, the 21 American foreign ministers (SHOUTS OF "OUT!") are not seated here. It is very sad that they are not present, so that they could have a chance to see the people they condemned at the Costa Rica meeting. It is sad that they are not here, so they could see how different the diplomatic language of the foreign ministries and the language of the peoples are!

There, however, our foreign minister spoke on behalf of our people (OVATION). But those who heard him, the majority of those who were gathered there, did not represent their peoples. If there, in Costa Rica, men representing the true interests and feelings of the peoples of America, particularly the peoples of Latin America, had gathered there, never could a statement such as that issued against the interests of an American people and against the interests of all the brotherly peoples of America have been drafted (APPLAUSE).

And what were they discussing there? There they were playing with the destiny of our country, there they were white-washing the aggressions against our country. There they were sharpening the dagger

which the criminal hand of Yankee imperialism wants to drive into the heart of the Cuban homeland (SHOUTS OF "Cuba, yes, Yankees, no"!).

But why did they want to condemn Cuba? What has Cuba done to be condemned? What has our people done to merit the Costa Rico Declaration? Our people have done nothing but break their chains! (APPLAUSE). Our people have done nothing, harming no other people and taking nothing from any other people, than to fight for a better destiny. Our people have wanted only to be free, our people have wanted only to live from their own works, and our people have wanted nothing but to live from the fruits of their efforts. Our people have wanted nothing except to have what is theirs, that what is produced from their land, that what is produced with their blood, that what is produced with their sweat should be theirs (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "Certainly, Fidel, for sure, hit the Yankees hard!").

The Cuban people have only wanted the decisions guiding their conduct to be theirs, that the flag with the solitary star which flutters over our homeland should be theirs and theirs alone! (APPLAUSE). They wanted their laws to be their own, their natural wealth to be their own, and their democratic and revolutionary institutions to be their own. They wanted their fate to be their own, a fate in which no interest, no oligarchy and no government, however powerful it might be, would have a right to interfere (APPLAUSE).

And it must be our freedom, because it has cost us much sacrifice to win it. Sovereignty must be ours and complete, because our people have been fighting for sovereignty for a century. The wealth of our land and the fruits of our labor must be ours, because our people have had to sacrifice much for this and all that has been created has been created by the people, and all there is here of wealth has been produced by our people, through their sweat and their labor (APPLAUSE).

Our people had a right to be a free people one day. Our people had a right to govern their own destiny one day. Our people had a right to expect one day to have a government which would not defend the foreign monopolies, which would not defend the privileged interests, which would not defend the exploiters, but which would put the interests of the people and their homeland above the interests of the greedy foreigners, a government which would put the interests of the people, the interests of the peasants, the interests of the workers, the interests of the young people and children, the interests of the women and the old people above the interests of the privileged and the exploiters (APPLAUSE).

When the revolution came to power on 1 January 1959, just a little more than a year and a half ago, what was there in our homeland? What was there in our homeland but tears, blood, misery and sweat? What was there for the peasants in our country? What was there for the children? What was there for the workers here? What was there in Cuba for the humble families? What prevailed in our homeland until that day? The most inhumane exploitation, abuse, injustice, systematic plunder of public funds by greedy politicians, had prevailed, the systematic exploitation of our national wealth by foreign monopolies, inequality and discrimination, lies and deceit, submission to foreign ambitions and poverty had prevailed.

Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of families lived without hope in their humble huts. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of children were without schools. More than a half a million Cubans were without work. And black Cubans had less opportunity than anyone to find work (APPLAUSE). The rural people lived in bad conditions. The sugar cane workers were employed only a few months a year and they and their children suffered hunger the rest of the time. Vice, gambling and all that goes with it prevailed in our country. Farmers were exploited, fishermen were exploited, workers were exploited; the vast majority of the people were exploited.

Nothing was ever done for the people. No measures of justice were ever undertaken to free the people from hunger, from their poverty, from their pain and suffering, to free you, the Cuban citizens, to free you, men and women, old people and children, to free you, this vast multitude which has gathered here, to free the Cuban nation, to do something for it, to make something good of it, absolutely nothing was done (APPLAUSE).

And the people, helpless, had to tolerate it. The people had to pay the highest rents in the world in our homeland. The people had to pay the highest electrical rates in the world in our homeland. The people had to pay for telephone services as dictated by the interests of a foreign company which extracted concessions from a tyrannical government, while the blood of our heroic student youth was still warm in the courtyards of the Presidential Palace (APPLAUSE).

The monetary reserves of the nation were down to only 70 million. Our country, in unequal trade with the United States, had paid out a billion dollars more than we had been paid for our goods in ten years. There were no factories. Who would establish factories for the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who were without work? There were no plans for agriculture, no plans for industry. Who would concern themselves with establishing industries? And the people, what could they do? What could sugar workers do? What could sugar cane farmers do? What could workers do? Workers had only their miserable wage, the piece of bread which they could not always provide to their starving children. The profits were carried off by the foreign monopolies, the profits were accumulated by the owners. The profits were accumulated by the interests which grew fat off the labor of the people. And this money was either kept indefinitely in the banks or was spent on all kinds of luxuries. Mainly, it went abroad.

Who would establish factories for the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who were without work? And as the Cuban population was growing, and as each year more than 50,000 young people came of age, what were they to live on? What was the growing population of our homeland to live on? How were the peasants, the children of the peasants, to live when they had neither work nor land? How was a people which was growing, and whose growth was much more rapid than the increase in its industry and its economy supposed to live?

The people lacked every kind of opportunity. The son of a peasant, or of a worker, or of any humble family, could hardly hope to become a professional one day, a doctor, an engineer, an architect, or a university technician. There were children of poor families who by dint of great sacrifice managed to complete higher studies, but the vast majority of the children of our families often even lacked the opportunity to learn their letters, and there were entire regions in Cuba where there had never been a teacher. Our people had access to nothing but work, if they could find it! For our people, only the worst was available. For our people, there were never any sports fields, never any streets, never any parks, and there were many places where if there was a park, some citizens - the black ones - were not allowed (APPLAUSE).

This was what the revolution inherited when it came to power: an economically underdeveloped country, a people which had been the victim of every kind of exploitation. This was what the revolution found at the end of its heroic and bloody struggle. And revolutions are not undertaken to leave things as they were. Revolutions are undertaken to correct all the injustices. Revolutions are not undertaken to protect and promote privileges. Revolutions are undertaken to aid those who need to be aided. Revolutions are undertaken to establish justice, to put an end to abuse, to put an end to exploitation. And our revolution was undertaken for this, and to this end those who fell gave their lives, and to achieve this goal so many sacrifices were made.

The revolution came to correct matters in our homeland. The revolution came to do what each Cuban had been asking to have done for so long. When any helpless Cuban citizen analyzed life in our country and the picture presented by national life, he said: "This must be corrected. This needs correcting, one day this must be changed." And the more optimistic said: "One day this will be changed."

To correct matters in their country, Cubans had been fighting for a long time. But there was a greater force which prevented us from correcting things in our country. This force was the imperialist penetration of the United States in our homeland. It was this force which frustrated our full independence. It was this force which prevented Calixto García and his brave soldiers in Santiago de Cuba from succeeding. It was this force which prevented the liberation army from undertaking revolution in the early days of the republic. It was this force which determined the destiny of our

homeland from the very first. It was this force which permitted the seizure of the natural resources and the best lands of our homeland by foreign interests. It was this force which appropriated the right to intervene in our country's affairs. It was this force which crushed so many revolutionary efforts. It was this force which was always associated with everything negative, everything reactionary, and everything abusive in our country. It was this force which prevented an earlier revolution in our homeland, and it is this force which is trying to prevent us from correcting things in our country now.

This is the force which maintained the tyranny. This is the force which trained the hired ruffians of the tyranny, which armed the soldiers of the tyrant, which provided weapons, planes and bombs to the tyrant's regime, in order to keep our people under the worst kind of oppression. This force has been the main enemy of development and progress in our country. This force has been the main cause of our evils. This force has dedicated itself to the failure of the Cuban revolution. This force is trying to ensure that the war criminals will return, that the exploiters will return, that the monopolies will return, that the large estate owners will return, that misery will return, that oppression will return to our country (APPLAUSE).

Cubans must see with full clarity that imperialism is the force to which we refer, that it is trying to prevent our people from achieving full development. They must understand that this force does not want you, the Cubans, to achieve a higher standard of living. It does not want your children educated, it does not want our workers to profit from the fruits of their labor. It does not want our peasants to enjoy the fruits of their land. It does not, in a word, want our people to be able to grow, to be able to work and to have a better destiny.

Our people have not had an opportunity in the past to understand these great truths. The truth was concealed from our people. Our people were miserably deceived. Our people were kept divided and confused. Our people have never had an opportunity to discuss these matters of an international nature. The people did not know a word of what was being said by the American Ambassador to the government leaders. The people did not know a word of what the foreign ministers were saying, the people counted for nothing. The people were not gathered together to learn about their problems. The people were not gathered together to be guided or to be told the truth. The destinies of our peoples were decided by the US Foreign Minister, our people counted for nothing in the destiny of the country.

Could Cuba continue to resign itself to this fate? Could Cubans continue to tolerate this system? (SHOUTS OF "No!") What have the Cubans done? All they have done is to rebel against all this. All the Cubans have done is to free themselves from all this (APPLAUSE).

In their efforts to ensure that the revolution would fail, they began by slandering it, they began by waging a campaign against it throughout the world, to isolate us from the brotherly peoples of this continent, and to ensure that the world would not know what our revolution was accomplishing. Then, when the efforts to discredit the revolution, to divide the revolution, to hold the revolution back, failed, more or less direct attacks began. The bombing of our cane fields, air attacks upon our territory began. They continued their maneuvers to leave us without oil and they eventually attacked our economy and lowered our sugar quota by almost a million tons.

This was a policy of aggression against our country, an act of violating international law, an act constituting economic aggression against a small country, in order to make it abandon its revolutionary purpose. This was economic aggression, to obtain a political result. The smallest nation had been attacked, the smallest nation had had its fields bombed and burned by planes coming from the United States.

The logical thing, in any meeting of foreign ministers, would not have been to condemn Cuba, but to condemn the United States for its attacks upon a small country. The absurd thing was that the small country was condemned by the foreign ministers, precisely because it served the purposes of the powerful aggressor country. And this is what we are going to discuss today in this national general assembly of the people of Cuba.

First of all, why have we called this general assembly of the people? What does a general assembly of the people mean? First of all, it means that the people is sovereign, that is to say, that sovereignty lies with the peoples and that all power issues from it (APPLAUSE). The people of Cuba is sovereign. No one can dispute that the majority of the people is represented here. No one can dispute that this gathering represents the people. No crowd such as this has ever gathered in the annals of the history of our homeland. No meeting such as this has ever been held in the annals of the history of our homeland. No crowd such as this has ever gathered and no meetings such as this have ever been held in the annals of the history of America (APPLAUSE).

Today, we Cubans can speak to America. We Cubans can speak today to the world. This is no gathering of political bosses. This is no gathering of a handful of mercenaries. This is a gather today of the people! (APPLAUSE). Let those who want to know what a meeting of the people is come and see this! Let those who want to know what a democratic people is come and see this! Let those who want to see what the people guiding its own destiny is come and see this! Let those who want to know what a democracy is come and see this!

Today, we can speak to America and the world (SHOUTS OF "Fidel, Fidel, Fidel!") because it is not a group of men claiming to represent a people speaking, as did those who claimed to represent the brotherly peoples of America at that meeting. We can speak to America with the voice and the approval and the support of an entire nation! Let those elsewhere in America who claim to speak on behalf of their people gather those peoples together! Let those elsewhere in America who claim to represent their peoples and who went to Costa Rica to speak on behalf of their people gather their respective peoples together! Let those in America who claim to be democrats gather their peoples together, as we have gathered ours here today, to discuss the problems of America with their peoples.

For the agreements of any international congress to have validity, they must have the approval of the people. If they want us to respect the Costa Rica declarations, let them submit them to their respective peoples for approval! (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "Fidel, Fidel," "Cuba, yes! Yankees, no!" "Fidel, for sure, hit the Yankees hard," and "What does Fidel have that Americans can't beat?" SHOUTS ARE ONLY QUIETED BY THE NATIONAL ANTHEM).

This is a principle, a basic principle of public law - no foreign minister can commit their nation in international legal documents if those documents do not have the approval of the people. No representative of any country attends an international gathering on his own behalf. No one has the right to pledge the international policy of a nation on their own account, and those who pledge the conduct of their countries without truly representing them in fact pledge nothing. Any document drafted without regard for the sovereign will of the people is null and void. Therefore, the validity of the Costa Rica Declaration depends not on the foreign ministers, but on the peoples, and no one can tell the people of Cuba that this declaration is valid because they claim to represent their peoples. No! They must prove to us that this is the feeling of the peoples (APPLAUSE). And we ask the government of Venezuela, the government of Peru, the government of Chile, the government of Argentina, the government of Brazil, the government of Ecuador, the government of Costa Rica, that is, we respectfully ask the governments of America to call their peoples together in general assemblies and submit the Costa Rica Declaration to them (APPLAUSE).

And let them not say that they cannot do so! We are speaking democratically, because we can indeed speak of democracy, we who call the people together and let the people decide (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS). Because why doesn't the President of Venezuela call the people together? (SHOUTS) We respectfully ask the President of Venezuela to gather the people of Venezuela together in Caracas and submit the Costa Rica Declaration to them. We respectfully ask the President of Argentina (WHISTLES AND SHOUTS) to call the people of Argentina together in a general assembly in Buenos Aires, and to discuss with them, as we are doing here, the Costa Rico Declaration (SHOUTS). We respectfully ask the government of Uruguay to gather the people of Uruguay together in the capital of that country and to discuss the Costa Rica Declaration with them. We respectfully ask the government of Chile to gather

together in the capital city (SHOUTS) - no, don't say anything - we will wait and see if they do so (SHOUTS) - to call the people of Chile together in the capital and discuss the Costa Rica Declaration with them. We ask the government of Peru, the government of Ecuador, but not, naturally, the government of Nicaragua, or Guatemala, or Paraguay, because this would be a joke. No, we are not speaking of these tyrannical governments, like that of Nicaragua or that of Paraguay - no! We are talking of those which call themselves democratic governments, because democracy comes from the people! Democracy means the government of the people, by the people and for the people (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "with or without the OAS we will win the battle!").

And the government which does not call the people together is not democratic! The government which does not consult with the people is not democratic! To be democratic it is necessary to consult the people! (SHOUTS OF "This only happens in Cuba!").

And this indeed is popular representation, because here there is no "rigging," no fraud, no purchased votes, no political bosses, no political machines, nothing of the sort! This is pure democracy (APPLAUSE). This is what a democracy free of impurities, a truly "pasteurized" democracy is (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE). And let them not tell us that the other is more democratic than this, that the democracy of the political bosses, of the rigged elections, of petty politics, of bribery, of buying votes, of coercion, of political machines is purer than this.

Could there be anything more pure than a gathering of all the people? (SHOUTS OF "No!"). Has anyone forced the people to come? (SHOUTS OF "No!"). Has anyone paid the people to come here? (SHOUTS OF "No!"). Are you being paid for the work you would normally be doing? Because we know that in a packed crowd such as this there are many who would be uncomfortable.

And we know the thirst from which you are suffering, we know the sacrifice you are making. (SHOUTS OF "That's all right! Forget it!"). When any of you comes from such a distant place as the Province of Oriente, or the Province of Camagüey, or Las Villas, or Matanzas, or the rural part of Havana Province, of the distant quarters of the capital, to stand here for hours and hours and to make all these sacrifices, you are doing so in an absolutely spontaneous fashion. Each one of you knows that it is his duty and comes here because he believes it is his duty, and that you have great duties toward your homeland, that you have to defend homeland high, and you have to rise up in protest against slander (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "That's right!").

And you know that we must send a message to the brotherly peoples of America, that we must answer the Costa Rica Declaration, that the entire people must be present, because this is a people aware of its duties, a people which knows that it is playing a great historical role, that it is defending the very noble cause, that it is lighting the way for 200 million human beings who are today suffering from the things from which you suffered here in the past (APPLAUSE).

And what does this mean? That the people are united, because the people know that their interests are the interests which count, that it is their will, which counts, that in their homeland today absolutely nothing is done except for their good. And this is how all governments should be. All governments should exist to do good for their people, not to rob, not to plunder, not to sell out the people, not to betray the people (APPLAUSE).

And it is for this reason that we who can indeed speak for democracy set this forth to the governments of America, and we hope that no one will be offended by this, because we are setting forth nothing evil. We are only gathering the people together and all the people united have the last word to say about the Costa Rica Declaration, and if the people do not give it their approval, the Costa Rica Declaration has no validity for us! (APPLAUSE). And we hope that no democratic government in America will take offense because we have asked it to gather the people together.

And since there are those who say that it is we who are withdrawing from the American family, we say to them that we are not, that those who have withdrawn from the American family -- that is to say, the

Latin American family, in order to associate with the exploiting Yankee Empire are those who were present there in Costa Rica. They indeed are withdrawing from the Latin American family. But we are not. On the contrary, we want our family, the peoples of Latin America, to meet together and to have the last word, because this indeed is our family - the peoples of Latin America! (APPLAUSE).

But what is happening? What is the empire doing? It has cut our sugar quota and distributed it among all these governments which should have condemned this action. In other words, our country was the victim. The US government cut our quota, and before going there to talk, it distributed it among the judges. What has the United States government done? It has engaged in bribery. It offered the judges a part of our quota it had taken from us. But it did something else as well. While the discussions were going on in Costa Rica, 600 million dollars of credit for distribution among these governments, that is to say, the oligarchies of Latin America, was approved. How could a government with any respect for itself or for the others offer 600 million dollars of credit to the participating countries during a conference? How can this be regarded as a moral policy? The policy of the government of the United States which cut our quota and distributed it among the oligarchies, allocating 600 million dollars of credit during the conference to these oligarchies is an immoral one! In this way they can buy the oligarchies, but they cannot buy the peoples! Let them go and ask the peoples! (APPLAUSE). Let them go and ask the peoples and they will see that they will do what we did, telling them: "No, what we want is for the mines to be ours, for the oil to be ours, for the industries to be ours. Let the monopolies go back where they came from, for we do not need their dollars." This is what the peoples will say! (APPLAUSE).

Why? What is it that the people of Venezuela want? To be given dollars? No, what they want is that dollars not be taken away from there! This is what they want, that their oil not be taken, that their natural resources not be exhausted. What the people of Venezuela want is for their oil, their mines, their natural resources to be returned to them so that they can develop their natural resources and advance. This is what the people of Venezuela want. And this is what all the peoples want.

The peoples know that this money remains in the hands of the oligarchies, the large estate owners, the exploiters, all of those who direct the politics of these countries there. The peoples know that they will receive nothing. This is why this diplomacy is carried on in secret, and nothing is said to the peoples. The peoples are simple spectators, and they are not consulted when these decisions are made.

For this reason, we say to the imperialists that what matters is not the opinion of the oligarchy, because oligarchies can sell out, but the brotherly peoples of America will never sell themselves for any imperialist gold! (APPLAUSE).

The imperialists went there to talk with their wallet in one hand and a bludgeon in the other. However, I can tell you that even if they had not taken a wallet, the Costa Rica Declaration would have been signed. Why? Because they had the bludgeon with them. And they would not even have had to use it, and the others would have voted with the imperialists. Do you know why? Because the large estate owners of America do not want agrarian reform. The monopolies of America do not want agrarian reform. The exploiters in Latin America do not want justice in Latin America. Thus, they, out of pure fear of a revolution which has done away with all privileges here, which has done away with the large estates, which has done away with exploitation, out of pure fear of a revolution such as this, and out of fear that the peoples will catch the revolutionary contagion from Cuba, they vote against Cuba, because what they want is to have the example of the Cuban revolution destroyed.

But this is not what the workers of Latin America think. This is not what the peasants think, not what the students think, not what the people of Latin America think. The people of Latin America, although a campaign has been waged against Cuba, although the cable reports of the Yankee press agencies continually lie about the slander and say all kinds of false things about the revolution, the peoples do not swallow the lies of the imperialists! (APPLAUSE).

Now, then, what did we do? We went there to talk, we set forth our viewpoint there, and we did indeed talk. What happened? What everyone expected. Despite the formidable reasons and the extraordinary

moral force on the side of Cuba, those foreign ministers, although many of them were ashamed, signed the Declaration. Not all, because Foreign Minister Arcaya of Venezuela (APPLAUSE) ignoring, or rather refusing to heed the governmental directive, because although the Venezuelan delegation, following the instructions of the government of Venezuela, signed, Foreign Minister Arcaya, representing the feeling of this heroic people of Venezuela, which has been demonstrating in the streets for a week a protest against the Costa Rica Declaration (APPLAUSE). Foreign Minister Arcaya refused to sign the Declaration.

And there is another case, that of the foreign minister who called this meeting, obviously on the instructions of his government, because it was the Foreign Minister of Peru who called the meeting to discuss the so-called extra continental intervention. He was so disgusted by the authoritarian attitude of the US State Department, so disgusted by this farce that the Foreign Minister of Peru also refused to sign the Declaration (APPLAUSE).

And although the Prime Minister of Mexico signed the Declaration, he had hardly returned to Mexico before he said that he did not in any way approve of the condemnation of Cuba, and although the Declaration certainly was such a condemnation, he personally said that he did not want to condemn the Cuban revolution.

This means that such is the moral force of Cuba, such is the prestige of our revolution, that a number of foreign ministers refused to sign the Declaration, and some of those who did sign made statements setting forth their sympathies with Cuba.

Obviously, this does not alter the content of the Declaration, which is against Cuba. And we know that very strange things happened at this conference, where, Comrade Olivares informs us, the delegation from Argentina even presented a proposal in English - it presented a proposal in English there! Then it was explained that this was an error, but what an error - a delegation from a Spanish speaking country presenting a proposal in English (SHOUTS).

Was this a triumph for imperialism? No, if it was a victory, it was a pyrrhic victory. Pyrrhic victories are those in which one loses more than one gains. We will see now what they will say about this democratic gathering, and whether they will dare now to say that a people must respect a resolution which is not democratic. This will end their talk of democracy! To date they have been able to talk of democracy in the United States (SHOUTS), but now, from now on, it will be we who speak of democracy, we who gather the people together and discuss problems with the people (APPLAUSE). And those who have to pass emergency laws, repressive laws, persecuting the people in the streets there with repressive force, jailing the citizens, let them not speak of democracy. They who cannot gather the people together - let them not talk of democracy. They who cannot gather the people together and consult with the people and rely on the people to decide on the destiny of the country - let them not repeat the old phrases about democracy! And now we are going to discuss, we are going to decide. The people of Cuba will decide at this national general assembly of the people about the Costa Rica Declaration. Also we have to formulate our declaration. As they issued theirs, we must issue ours here, our Havana Declaration (APPLAUSE).

Almost all the articles in the Declaration attack Cuba, but we are going to read the three key ones, those which are most important. Then we are going to decide if we accept or reject this Declaration. We went to Costa Rica. We did not sign and came here. Now we are going to submit the Declaration to the people of Cuba.

That statement reads in Article One: "It strongly condemns the intervention or threat of intervention, even if it is conditioned" - look where we are going, even if it is conditioned - "by an extra-continental power in the affairs of the American republics, and declares that the acceptance of a threat of extra-continental intervention by an American state jeopardizes American solidarity and security, which obliges the Organization of American States to disapprove and reject it with equal energy." Which energy, the energy of the camarilla or the energy of the people? Because the energy of the people, as far as I know, the energy of the people is being invested in acts of protest in the streets of the capitals

of the American nations.

So this forces us to ask the people, gathered in general assembly, the first question: if our island is militarily invaded by imperialist forces, do you accept or not the help of the Soviet Union? (THE PEOPLE SHOUT: "Yes! Furthermore, you can hear SHOUTS OF: "Fidel, Fidel!" "Cuba, yes! Yankees, no!" "Fidel, Fidel, what does Fidel have that the Americans can't beat!", "down with Caimanera!").

First vote and first response from the Cuban people gathered in a national general assembly. First response to the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica: That the people of Cuba, gathered in a national general assembly, declare, that if the island of Cuba is invaded by imperialist military forces, Cuba accepts the help of the Soviet Union (APPLAUSE).

It is good, it is good that we, furthermore, ask the foreign ministers who strongly condemned the threat of intervention, even if it is conditioned by an extra-continental power. In other words, they declare that if the Soviet Union gives us its military support in case we are invaded by the United States, that they condemn the offer of aid and the acceptance of aid, how nice!

We would like to ask the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica another question: What do the governments of Latin America count on to defend Cuba if it is invaded by imperialist military forces, as Mexico was invaded once, twice, several times, Nicaragua, Haiti was invaded and Costa Rica was invaded? What do the governments of Latin America count on, what military forces do they have to defend Cuba?

First of all, they have none, and secondly, if they had we could not count on them either. This means that what they sought to do was to deprive us of this aid, aid in the event of aggression. Why? So that we would depend exclusively on them, when certainly they would abandon us in the struggle. Thus, the intelligent answer, the proper answer, the revolutionary answer and the courageous answer is that which the people of Cuba sent to the foreign ministers who met in Costa Rica (APPLAUSE). Thus, on this point, they now know what to count on, what they must expect.

There is another point which says: "We also reject the intents of the Sino-Soviet powers to make capital of the political, economic or social situation in any American nation" - they do not mention Cuba, but they are referring to Cuba - "because this intent is likely to destroy continental unity, and to endanger the peace and security of the hemisphere."

Now we are going to ask a question? Do the people believe that the Soviet Union or the Chinese People's Republic are to blame for the revolution we have undertaken here? (SHOUTS FROM THE PEOPLE OF "No!"). Who is to blame for this revolution? Who is responsible for the fact that the Cubans have to undertake this revolution? Who is to blame: the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic or the Yankee imperialists?

(SHOUTS OF "the Yankees!"). This means that the Yankee imperialists are solely to blame for the fact that this revolution is taking place in Cuba, and therefore the people of Cuba reject this accusation that the Soviet Union or the Chinese People's Republic are trying, as it says here, "to make capital of the political, economic and social situation of an American nation, to destroy continental unity and endanger the peace and security of the hemisphere." Who is endangering continental unity? (SHOUTS OF "the Yankees!"). Who is separating one Latin people from the other Latin peoples? (SHOUTS OF "the Yankees!"). Who summoned together their group of Latin American foreign ministers to make a declaration against a Latin people? The Yankees. Who has been the sole aggressor on this continent? The Yankees.

Thus our answer to this second point is that the Latin American people have only been attacked, the unity of the peoples of Latin American has only been destroyed by the Yankee imperialists, who are solely responsible for the revolutionary process which is occurring in Cuba, and will take place in Latin America, is the Yankee imperialism (APPLAUSE).

And to complete the evidence, one example suffices. Here, for example, we have a treaty which was signed on 7 March 1952 by the then Minister of State Mr. Aureliano Sánchez Arango (SHOUTS) and the American Ambassador. This treaty is called (SHOUTS OF "it was called") - is called or was called, it is all the same, the Bilateral Military Aid Agreement between Cuba and the United States of America. Of course, this was a treaty between a shark and a sardine.

And paragraph 2 in Article 1, for example, is interesting. I know that the people do not understand much about these treaty matters, because the people were never told a word about this. And this was the policy of the imperialists, who obliged each of the governments to sign a shark-sardine treaty, a military pact. You can imagine what kind of treaties these would

be between the United States and the countries of Latin America - bilateral agreements, binding all the peoples of Latin America by a series of pledges.

And paragraph 2 says: "the government of the Republic of Cuba promises to make effective use of the aid it receives from the government of the United States of America, in accordance with this agreement, with a view to carrying out the defense plans agreed upon by both governments, according to which the two governments will take part in important missions for the defense of the western hemisphere, and unless" - note well what the treaty says - "unless the consent of the government of the United States has previously been obtained, this aid will not be devoted to other purposes than those for which it was provided." This means that if we were witnesses to the fact that the planes they provided, the tanks they provided, the bombs and the weapons they provided were used to murder peasants, to bomb peasants in the Sierra Maestra and to murder thousands of Cubans, that is, to oppress the people and to wage a cruel war against the people, this treaty says that "unless the consent of the government of the United States of America was previously obtained, this aid should not be used for other purposes than those for which it was provided." What does this mean? That the government of the United States of America authorized the use of these guns, these bombs and these planes against the people of Cuba.

This is a treaty which absurd though it certainly seems, since the military mission departed long ago, but this treaty is still in effect. We are going to submit it to the people too for consideration. Today we are going to submit the question of whether this military treaty should be maintained or cancelled to the people. (SHOUTS OF "Cancel it!") Those who want this military treaty to be cancelled right now will raise their hands. (ALL HANDS IN THE CROWD WERE RAISED.) This means that in accordance with the sovereign will of the people of Cuba, this military treaty between Cuba and the United States which has cost so much blood is cancelled (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "burn it!"). No, we are not going to burn it. We will keep it for history, ragged though it is.

Tomorrow, the Ministry of State, or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as we call it under the revolutionary government, will inform the government of the United States that the people of Cuba, expressing their completely free and sovereign will in a national general assembly, have cancelled this military agreement, which is now outdated in terms of fact and feelings (SHOUTS OF "out!, out!" and "down with Caimanera!").

Just a moment, just a moment - we have not yet come to the problem of Caimanera on the agenda of this assembly (APPLAUSE). No, it will have to wait - there will be other national general assemblies, and we must take up each matter in its proper place. And we suggest to the people that we postpone the Caimanera problem until the proper time. We ask the people to do this, because we would like to give another explanation too. We are discussing today events of an international nature, aggressions of an international nature.

We have been the victim of economic aggression and, when they took 900,000 tons of sugar from us, we warned them in advance that they would pay, sugar mill by sugar mill and enterprise by enterprise, for the attacks they made upon our economy. They took 900,000, almost a million tons, from us, and we nationalized 36 sugar mills, the electric company, the telephone company, and the oil companies (APPLAUSE). Well, they still have something here, in reserve, and when they attack us economically

again, then we will nationalize the remaining enterprises.

What, then, will be the policy of the revolutionary government? Very simple and very clear, and it is also necessary that the people understand and support it. If they continue the economic attacks upon our country, we will continue to nationalize the US enterprises (APPLAUSE).

But, if despite the fact that our country and our people have been the victims of a continuing series of aggressions, the imperialists continue their attacks upon our country and their efforts to ruin our country economically and if they continue to attack our country, then we will gather the people in a general assembly and we will ask for the withdrawal of the US naval forces from the Caimanera territory (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "Down with Caimanera!").

Everyone already knows how they have taken over this part of our island. Everyone already knows what methods they have used - not discussion with a free and sovereign country, but dealing with a country under their control and a country subject to the clauses of the Platt Amendment. Also, everyone knows the risk involved for our country when a warlike and aggressive power maintains a base on our territory, the risk the presence of a Yankee military base on Cuban territory involves for our people in the event of an atomic war.

And also everyone knows how this has been a subject of constant concern to us, and in this very place we have said more than once that if anything should happen there, it would have to be self-generated, because we will never fall into the error of giving them a pretext to invade our country. If they want to invade our country, let them do so without the slightest pretext, without the slightest justification, which they never will have, and now they know what awaits them if they do invade our country. But we know well the duplicity and the ferocity of the US State Department. We are very familiar with the methods it has used. For this reason, we have warned the people and we have warned the world that we will never attack the base. On the contrary, what we must do is warn against any self-generated provocation, because they are capable, perfectly capable - who doubts it? - of planning a provocation there with war criminals, in order to have a pretext. And it is our duty to be always alert and to warn the people of everything, and to warn the world of all the dangers. We warn the people that anything which happens must be a provocation, because we will never attack the base. When circumstances dictate, we will in sovereign and democratic fashion, as we have done today, ask for the cancellation of this treaty in order to recover our territory, but we will never act in such a way as to give the imperialists a pretext for bloodshed in our country (APPLAUSE).

And as our people are intelligent, and understand that it is necessary to advance firmly, that we must carry forward this struggle with the greatest intelligence, for this reason the people support the line the revolutionary government is following on these delicate and difficult matters.

Now we come to a point in the declaration which we have not yet dealt with, because there is a paragraph 5 which says: "We proclaim that all the member nations of the regional organization" - listen well - "that all the member nations of the regional organizations have the duty to submit to the discipline of the Inter-American system voluntarily and freely agreed upon, and that the most solid guarantee of their sovereignty and their political independence derives from obedience to the provisions of the charter of the Organization of American States."

Let us see what kind of a guarantee this is - "the most solid guarantee derives from the provisions of the charter of the OAS" - provisions which were not able to defend us against air attack, against the plans of the counterrevolutionaries, who are operating there in US territory, from the expeditions being organized, from the attacks planned, prepared and paid for by the US State Department, from the terrorist attacks, from the bombs and from any act of disturbance inspired, prepared and paid for by the US State Department. These provisions have not been able to protect us from these attacks, nor from the growing hostility toward our country, nor from economic aggression. But it states that "the member nations of the organization have the duty of submitting to the discipline." Indeed! Before submitting to the discipline, we would say that all member nations that is to say, all the governments, all the member

governments should gather the people together and consult the people about these OAS matters and about the Costa Rica Declaration. And when they consult the people, and when the people agree to this, then let them talk of discipline.

No, we understand our duty in this way: our Foreign Minister goes to Costa Rica with the Cuban delegation, the meeting is held, and the foreign ministers approve the declaration. What does the Cuban government do? The government of Cuba gathers the people together and submits the declaration to them. Now no nation can be bound by any agreement of an international nature against the will of its people. We have been the first and the only country to submit the question to the people for consideration. If this is what we have done, it is our duty. We obey what the people of Cuba say, not what the foreign ministers who take orders from Washington say (APPLAUSE). The government of Cuba is not bound to any obedience, any discipline, and any acknowledgement other than that which emanates from the free and sovereign will of its people.

There still remains some matters which we would like to submit to the people for consideration. We would like the people to say if they agree that the policy of our country should be one of friendship and trade with all the peoples of the world. (UNANIMOUS SHOUTS OF "Yes!").

We would like to submit another matter to the people. Our people have reestablished diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. We would like to ask our people if they are in agreement with our establishment of these relations (UNANIMOUS SHOUTS OF "Yes!"). We would like to ask if our people are in agreement with our maintaining relations with the other socialist countries too (UNANIMOUS SHOUT OF "Yes!").

And there remains another question of great importance. As you know, the imperialists have undertaken to accuse the Chinese People's Republic of intervening in Latin American matters too, although the fact is that to date our country has not maintained diplomatic relations with the Chinese People's Republic. On the contrary, our country has traditionally maintained relations with the puppet government, that which is protected there by the ships of the US Seventh Fleet. However, no country in Latin America has dared to reestablish relations, not only diplomatic but even trade relations, with the Chinese People's Republic. Therefore, the revolutionary government of Cuba desires to ask the people of Cuba if they are in agreement, if the people of Cuba in this sovereign and free assembly agree to establish diplomatic relations with the Chinese People's Republic. (UNANIMOUS SHOUTS OF "Yes!".) Therefore, as of this time, Cuba (shouting continues), therefore we will break off diplomatic relations with the puppet regime of Chiang Kai-shek (SHOUTS OF "Yes!") and if the Chinese People's Republic also desires to aid us in the event that Cuba is attacked by the imperialist military forces, Cuba will accept the aid of the Chinese People's Republic (UNANIMOUS SHOUT OF "Yes!" and "we will accept it!").

This means that we are indeed a free country in America, that we decide our national policy and our international policy in a democratic and sovereign manner. Democratic, that is to say, with the people, and sovereign, that is to say, without heed to the dictates of any foreign power.

This means that we, that is our people, do not ask the permission of anyone when it comes to making a decision. This means that we are a free country, a sovereign people. Those who can never call themselves free and sovereign peoples are those which have to go and ask the permission of Mr. Herter when they want to take a step (SHOUTS OF "Out!"), those who have to ask the permission of the Yankee Embassy before they can move. This gathering of our people today shows that in fact Cuba is the free territory of America! (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "Cuba, Yes! Yankees, No!").

They do not want revolutions in America? Well, they have a revolution here in America! they don't want justice done in an American country, so that finally our peasants will have land, our children will have schools, our families will have homes, the people will have work, beaches, opportunity, and so that the sons of the peasants and the workers alike can go to the universities? They do not want a happy people? Well, they have a happy people, even if they don't want it, because no one has made a gift of this happiness to this people.

This happiness has been won with much sacrifice, and this is a people which has a right to happiness, because it was able to win it, because it is only when there is a revolutionary spirit such as that of the people of Cuba, when there is a people a politically mature and as formidable as ours, that a struggle such as that Cuba is waging can be waged.

Our people have justly won the respect of the entire world, the admiration of the entire world, the love of the other peoples in the world, because they understand that we are a small people that we have had to overcome very great obstacles. They understand that we were a small people subject to Yankee influence, to Yankee propaganda, to Yankee films, to Yankee periodicals, to Yankee fashions, to Yankee politics, to Yankee customers, and that everything was Yankee here! (SHOUTS.) Oh, how they talk now, how they talk of Soviet intervention, or blame the Chinese People's Republic, when the sole influence we saw here constantly and the only books we had here daily, the only films we ever saw and the only customs and fashions we had - everything came from the United States! This means that if there was an intruder, it was the Yankee imperialist, who tried to destroy our national spirit, who tried to destroy the patriotism of the Cubans, who tried to destroy our resistance to the penetration of foreign interests. Thanks to the fact that we have an extraordinarily worthy people, thanks to the fact that this people began its struggle very early, and fought alone for its dependence for a century, a people which produced men such as Maceo, Céspedes, Agramonte, Calixto García, a people which had such an extraordinary Apostle, a man so farsighted, a man so humane, a man so eloquent and wise as Jose Martí, who forged the nationality of the homeland (PROLONGED APPLAUSE), and thanks to the men who undermost adverse conditions, the men who in the republican era waged and unequal struggle against Yankee penetration, men ranging from Juan Gualberto Gómez and Sanguily, who stubbornly opposed this penetration, to the men who in the 20's and 30's sacrificed themselves and fell in the struggle to ensure that the Cuban nationality, the Cuban national spirit, would survive, that the

national soul would not be absorbed by the powerful foreigner, thanks to these men, to this work of generations, to this tradition, we have been able to reap this maturity and this revolutionary awareness on the part of our people, which America admires, the world admires. Cubans are admired for their spirit, for their deeds, for their courage, for their enthusiasm, because the Cubans are a people who, when they are told "it is necessary to meet to respond to aggression, to show the enemy of Cuba that the people are with the revolution, to show that the people have no fear, so that they can see that the people are ready to carry out their pledge of "homeland or death!" (SHOUTS) - that people rally a number so extraordinary, filling a square as vast as this one, and providing a spectacle such as we never dreamed of seeing with our own eyes!

This is the explanation of the admiration of our visitors, because there is no more impressive or formidable spectacle than a people which is alive, which is aware, which has a soul, which has a morality, right on its side, a spirit of struggle, courage, when it is capable of understanding an ideal and sacrificing all individual interests for that ideal. Because when a people reaches this degree of revolutionary awareness, the individuals merge in the soul of the people and then, individually, none of us matters, for there is something which does not die and can never die - it is the people! Men individually may disappear, but peoples endure and this people of ours, this revolutionary people, this multitude, this people which parades, this people which rallies, this people which works, this people which studies, this people which is training itself is something which has eternal life, immortal life, something in which the work of each one of us, the grain of sand contributed by each one of us, will continue throughout history, because those who come afterward will follow the traditions of their people, as we have followed the traditions of those who began to fight for the Cuban nation a century ago. Those who come after us will follow our traditions and they will have the examples of those who came before us, and it is for this reason (APPLAUSE), for this reason that the people say: "Homeland or Death!"

What does this mean? This slogan means that no one of us cares if he dies provided his people lives, provided his homeland lives, that no one of us minds giving his life for the homeland, so that the homeland can continue to live (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS of "Homeland or Death" and "we will triumph").

And why do the people say "we will triumph"? The people say this because even though many of us may fall, even though individually many

of our compatriots, if the homeland needs them, will sacrifice their lives, it will not be in vain, but it will be so that the homeland can triumph! And for this reason each one of us says: "Homeland or Death!" And the people say "We will triumph!" The homeland says "we will triumph!" (SHOUTS OF "we will triumph!").

And we have not the slightest doubt that the homeland will triumph. We have not the slightest doubt because we know whereof we speak, and because, moreover, this is not the battle of a group of men, it is the battle of an entire people, and no entire people has ever lost a battle. This is a battle with the right on our side, a battle for justice, a battle for the welfare of our patriots, a battle for the welfare of our peers, a battle for the good of man, a battle for the good of mankind, and never has an entire people fighting for a noble cause lost the battle. But neither is Cuba alone. It would be alone if it were not defending a just cause, if it were not struggling for the good of mankind. But those who will be left alone are those who are struggling against the progress of mankind, against the welfare of man. They will be increasing alone, while we will daily have greater company, those of us who are fighting for the good of man and for the good of mankind! (APPLAUSE)

Our small homeland today represents interests which extend beyond our frontiers. To our small homeland has fallen the task of serving as the torch which lights the way for millions and millions of men and women like us, who are suffering in America today just as we suffered in the past! It is our glorious destiny to serve as a light which will never go out! A light which will be brighter every day and a light whose reflections will reach farther across the territories of our sisterly America every day!

And our people know this, and for this reason their response is so great, for this reason they act with such dignity and heroism.

Please allow us, those of us who have the responsibility of the revolutionary government, permit me and my comrades to express here, to satisfy our need to express the pride we feel about our people, the satisfaction we feel about our people, the infinite happiness we feel thanks to the successes of our people! (APPLAUSE and SHOUTS.) Please allow us to express the encouragement we feel in our work, the enthusiasm we feel in our struggle, as our fervor for this cause grows, and as we feel our strength and our energies multiply to continue working for the people, to continue fighting until the last vestiges of injustice, the last vestiges of poverty are gone, to continue working to bring welfare to our people, to make our people happy, to outdo ourselves, to fulfill our duty, more efficiently every day, more wisely every day. At moments like this, we promise ourselves that even the smallest errors must be eliminated, and we promise ourselves that although things have not been done entirely properly or perfectly well or with complete wisdom, because who knows better than we that men err, that men make mistakes, and that revolutions, however just, noble and good they may be sometimes commit injustices, because it is men who carry them out, men who implement them, and men who decide, but at moments like this, before such a formidable crowd as this, we feel that we, too, are growing and we feel as if we were yet stronger, had yet more love for this cause, if more love is possible, and we feel more ready to make the sacrifices which may be necessary, because probably very few times in history has any group of government leaders found itself so respected and loved by the people as have the men of the Cuban revolutionary government! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS of "we are with you! We are with you!".)

And there remains one more thing before concluding this gathering. We are going to submit for the consideration of the people a statement setting forth the viewpoints of the people of Cuba which we have been discussing. It is in the nature of an answer to the Costa Rica Declaration, a response of the peoples to the statement of the foreign ministers, the declaration which will go down in history of America as the Havana Declaration! (APPLAUSE.)

Once this declaration has been submitted to the people of Cuba for consideration, we will ask all the

revolutionary organizations in America, all the workers' trade unions, the student, intellectual, and artistic organizations and every revolutionary man in America to support it (APPLAUSE). It will have the authority of a declaration underwritten by an entire people, it will have the prestige of a democratic contribution by our people, because what must be stressed, and we will always have to stress it, is the fact that the revolution came to power thanks to the will of the people. It governs for the people and is kept in power solely by the support of the people! (APPLAUSE). There is a revolutionary government because there is a revolutionary people which supports it, and governments stay in power either by force or thanks to the support of the people. They are kept in power by the strength of military and political oligarchies, which represent the most reactionary interests of each country, which represent the exploitation of their workers and their peasants, and exploitation of their peoples, and they remain in power thanks to the combined strength or force, money and lies. And despite the attacks, despite the aggression, despite the slanderous campaigns behind which the powerful empire to the north has put its full support, despite its economic attacks and its international diplomatic maneuvers, the revolution remains in power. Why? Thanks to the people. And it will remain in power as long as it has the support of the people! (APPLAUSE). And it will have the support of the people as long as it struggles and works for the people! (APPLAUSE).

This declaration carries the weight of that strength and that support.

Havana Declaration:

"Invoking the image and the memory of José Martí (APPLAUSE), in Cuba, the free territory of America (APPLAUSE), the people, exercising the inalienable authority deriving from the effective exercise of its sovereignty, expressed in direct, universal and public suffrages, have met together in a national general assembly (APPLAUSE).

"On its own behalf and expressing the feelings of the peoples of our America, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba,

"FIRST: it condemns all of the provisions of the so-called San José de Costa Rica Declaration, a document dictated by US imperialists, and attacking the national self-determination, sovereignty and dignity of the brotherly peoples of this continent (APPLAUSE).

"SECOND: the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba energetically condemns the open and criminal intervention in which the US imperialists have engaged for more than a century against all of the peoples of Latin America, peoples whose territories have more than once been invaded in Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti, Santo Domingo and Cuba, and who have lost to the greed of the Yankee imperialists extensive and rich zones, such as Texas, vital strategic centers, such as the Panama Canal, entire countries, such as Puerto Rico, which has been transformed into an occupied territory, and who have also suffered ill treatment at the hands of the Marines, ill treatment both of our wives and daughters and of the noblest national historical symbols, such as the statue of Jose Martí." (APPLAUSE).

"This intervention, made possible by military superiority, unequal treaties and the miserable subjection of treasonable governments, has transformed our America, the America which Bolívar, Hidalgo, Juárez, San Martín, O'Higgins, Sucre, Tiradentes and Martí wanted to free, into a zone of exploitation over a period of more than 100 years, into a province of the Yankee financial and political empire, into a reserve of votes in international agencies, in which Latin American countries have played the role of cattle belonging to the "boisterous and brutal northern nation which scorns us" (APPLAUSE).

"The National General Assembly of the People declares that the acceptance by the governments which officially claim to represent the countries of Latin America of this continuous and historically undeniable intervention betrays their peoples' dreams of independence, destroys their sovereignty and prevents true solidarity among our countries, and this fact obliges this assembly to reject it, in the name of the people of Cuba, and speaking for the hopes and the determination of the Latin American peoples and the desire of the great immortals of our America for liberty (APPLAUSE).

"THIRD: The National General Assembly of the People also rejects the effort to preserve the Monroe Doctrine, which has been used to date, as José Martí foresaw, 'to extend the domination in America' of the greedy imperialists, and in order the better to spread the poison which José Martí also denounced in his day, 'the poison of the loans, the canals, the railroads.'

"For this reason, and confronted with the hypocritical Pan Americanism which is but the domination of the Yankee monopolies over the interests of our peoples and the Yankee maneuverings of the governments pledged to Washington, the Assembly of the People of Cuba proclaims the liberating Latin Americanism which inspired José Martí and Benito Juárez

(APPLAUSE). And, in extending its friendship toward the US people - the people whose Negroes are lynched, whose intellectuals are persecuted, whose workers are forced to accept the leadership of gangsters - we reassert our determination to advance 'with all the world and not with a part of it' (APPLAUSE).

"FOURTH: The National General Assembly of the People declares that the aid spontaneously offered by the Soviet Union to Cuba for the eventuality of a possible attack on our country by the imperialist military forces can never be regarded as an act of intervention, but constitutes an obvious gesture of solidarity, and that this aid, offered to Cuba as protection against an imminent attack by the Yankee Pentagon (SHOUTS), does as much honor to the government of the Soviet Union offering it as it does dishonor to the government of the United States, its cowardly and criminal attacks upon Cuba (APPLAUSE).

"THEREFORE: The National General Assembly of the People declares to America and the world that it accepts and welcomes the support of the rockets of the Soviet Union (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS of 'Death to the gringo!'), in the event of an attack on its territory by the military forces of the United States.

"FIFTH: The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba categorically denies that there has been any intention on the part of the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic 'to make capital of the economic, political and social position of Cuba, to destroy continental unity and endanger the unity of the hemisphere.'

"From the first to the last shot, from the first to the last of the 20,000 martyrs who fell in the struggle to overthrow the tyranny and win revolutionary power, from the first to the last act of the revolution, the people have acted freely and in accordance with their own absolute determination, and therefore the United States or the Chinese People's Republic can never be blamed for the existence of a revolution, which is the full response of Cuba to the crimes and the injustices committed by the imperialists in America (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS of "Fidel, for sure, hit the Yankees hard!").

"On the contrary, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba believes that the policy of isolation of and hostility toward the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic called for by the government of the United States and imposed by it on the governments of Latin America, and the warlike and aggressive conduct of the US government, and its systematic refusal to accept the Chinese People's Republic in the United Nations, despite the fact that it represents almost all of a country of more than 600 million persons, endangers the peace and security of the hemisphere and the world.

"Therefore, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba ratifies its policy of friendship with all the peoples of the world, reaffirms its determination to establish diplomatic relations with the socialist countries, too (APPLAUSE and SHOUTS of "Khrushchev! Khrushchev!"), and as of this time, exercising its free and sovereign will, informs the government of the Chinese People's Republic that it is willing to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries and that therefore, the relations which Cuba has maintained to date with the puppet regime maintained in Formosa by the ships of the Yankee Seventh Fleet no longer exist (APPLAUSE).

"SIXTH: The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba reasserts, and is certain that in doing so it is expressing a common view of the peoples of Latin America, that democracy is not compatible with the financial oligarchy, with the existence of discrimination against the negro and the actions of the Ku Klux Klan, with the persecution which has deprived such scientists as Oppenheimer of their posts, which for years prevented the world from hearing the marvelous voice of Paul Robeson, a prisoner in his own country, and which caused the death, despite the protest and the horror of the entire world, and despite appeals from the governments of various countries and Pope Pius XII, of the Rosenbergs.

"The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba sets forth the Cuban conviction that democracy cannot consist of the exercise of the vote alone, which is almost always fictitious and rigged by large landowners and professional politicians, but in the right of the citizens to decide, as they are doing now in this General Assembly of the People of Cuba, on their own destiny. Democracy, moreover, will only exist in America when the peoples are truly free to choose, when the humble are not reduced by hunger, social inequality, illiteracy and the court systems to the most ominous impotence.

"For this reason, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba condemns large landholdings, the source of misery for the peasant and a backward and inhuman system of agricultural production. It condemns starvation wages and the evil exploitation of human labor by illegitimate and privileged interests. It condemns illiteracy, the lack of teachers, schools, doctors and hospitals, the lack of security for the old which prevails in American countries. It condemns the discrimination against the Negro and the Indian. It condemns the inequality and exploitation of woman. It condemns the military and political oligarchies which keep our peoples in misery and prevent their democratic development and the full exercise of their sovereignty. It condemns the concession of the natural resources of our countries to foreign monopolies as a policy of selling out and betraying the interests of the peoples. It condemns the governments which ignore the feelings of their peoples in order to heed the mandates of

Washington. It condemns the systematic deception of the peoples by press organs which serve the interests of the oligarchies and the policy of the imperialist oppressor. It condemns the monopoly held on news by the Yankee press agencies, which are tools of US trusts and agents of Washington. It condemns the repressive laws which prevent the workers, peasants, students and intellectuals, the vast majority in each country, from organizing and fighting for their social and patriotic demands. It condemns the monopolies and the imperialist enterprises which continually plunder our wealth, exploit our workers and peasants, impoverish our economies and keep them backward, and subject Latin American politics to their designs and interests.

"The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba, finally, condemns the exploitation of man by man (APPLAUSE) and the exploitation of the underdeveloped countries by imperialist financial capital. Therefore, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba proclaims to America:

"The right of the peasants to land, the right of the worker of the fruits of his labor, the right of children to education, and the right of the ill to medical and hospital aid, the right of young people to work, the right of students to free, experimental and scientific education, the right of the Negroes and Indians to 'the full dignity of man,' the right of woman to civil, social and political equality, the right of old people to a secure old age, the right of intellectuals, artists and scientists to struggle, through their works, for a better world, the right of nations to nationalize the imperialist monopolies, thus recovering their wealth and national resources, the right of countries to free trade with all the peoples of the world, the right of nations to full sovereignty, the right of the peoples to transform their military fortresses into schools, and to arm their workers, their peasants, their students, their intellectuals, the Negro, and the Indian, women, young people, old people, all the oppressed and exploited, so that they themselves can defend their rights and their destiny. (APPLAUSE and SHOUTS of "Fidel, Fidel, what is there about him that makes the Americans powerless against him?").

"SEVENTH: The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba postulates that it is the duty of the workers, the peasants, the students, and intellectuals, the Negroes, the Indians, young people, women, and old people to fight for their economic, political and social demands

(APPLAUSE). It is the duty of oppressed and exploited nations to fight for their liberation. It is the duty of each people to stand with all the oppressed, colonized, exploited or attacked peoples (APPLAUSE), wherever in the world they may be and whatever geographic distance may separate them. All the peoples of the world are brothers! (SHOUTS OF "Unity, unity!").

"EIGHTH: The National General Assembly of the People of Cuba reaffirms its faith in the prompt, united and triumphant advance of Latin America, free of the bonds which transformed Latin American economies into sources of wealth for the US imperialists and prevented the people from making their true voice heard in meetings in which subservient foreign ministers chorused infamous agreements with the despotic master. It therefore ratifies its decision to work for this coming Latin American destiny which will permit all countries to establish true solidarity based on the free will of each one of them and on the joint hopes of all. In the struggle for this liberated Latin America, along with the obedient voices of those who have usurped official representation, the genuine voice of the people can now be heard. This voice with invincible power comes from the depths of the Latin America coal and tin mines, from the factories and sugar mills, from the feudal estates where the peasants and farmers and cowboys of all the Latin American nations, the heirs of Zapata and Sandino, are taking up weapons for their freedom. This voice makes itself heard through their poets and their novelists, their students, women, children and vigilant old people. To this sisterly voice, the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba answers (APPLAUSE): we are here! Cuba will not falter. Cuba is here today to ratify its eternal alternative to Latin America and the world, as a historic pledge: Homeland or death!

"NINTH: The General Assembly of the People of Cuba:

"Resolves that this declaration will be known as the Havana Declaration, Cuba, Havana, free territory of America, 2 September 1960 (APPLAUSE)."

We submit this Havana Declaration to the people for their consideration. Let those who support the declaration raise their hands. (ALL IN THE CROWD RAISE HANDS, AND FOR SOME MINUTES THERE IS SHOUTING: "We vote with Fidel!" And "Fidel, Fidel, what is there about him that the Americans can do nothing against him?" Cheers for Raúl Roa!).

And now there is one other thing. What are we doing with the San José Declaration? (SHOUTS OF "We are tearing it up!") We are tearing it up! (Fidel tore it up before the crowd).

These agreements of the National General Assembly of the People of Cuba, which we have just approved, will be communicated to all the brotherly peoples of Latin America.

(OVATION).

Verbatim records.

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